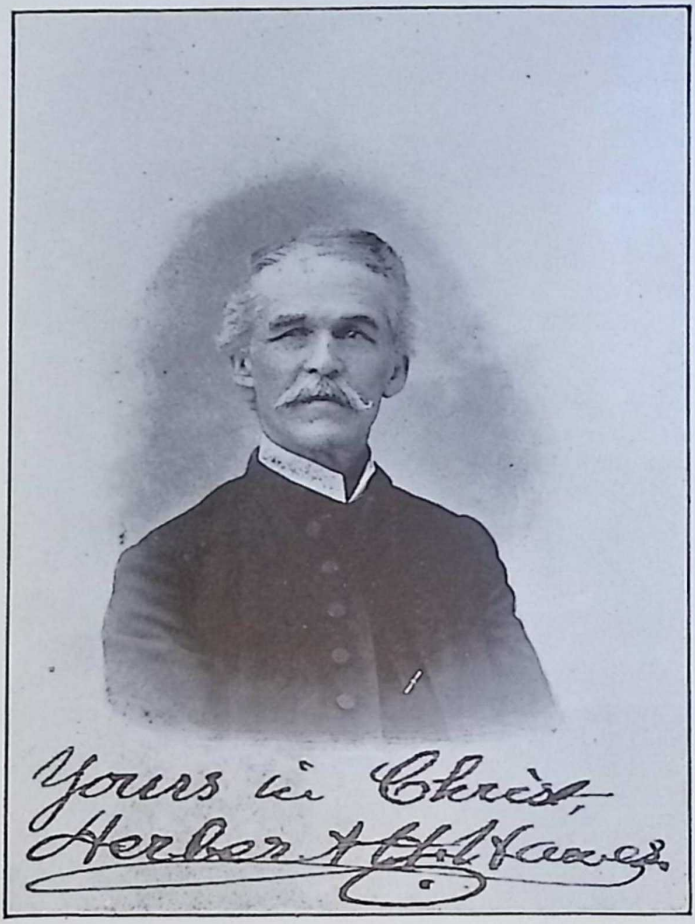

Yours in Christ,
Herbert H. Hawes.

BIBLE CHURCH STUDIES.

BY

REV. HERBERT H. HAWES, D. D.

BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA.

An Independent Course of Bible Study, Apart from Former Studies and Beliefs

AND

EXCLUSIVE OF ALL SOURCES OF INFORMATION SAVE THE WORD OF GOD.

"What was I, that I could withstand God?"

—*Acts xi, 17.*

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DEDICATION.

"Unto Him who loved the Church and gave himself for it, that He might present it to himself, a glorious Church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," this work is humbly and reverently dedicated, with the prayer that it may serve somewhat unto the end for which He besought the Father, in behalf of His people who should believe on Him, in all ages: "That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

HERBERT H. HAWES.

Bluefield, West Virginia,
February 1st, 1897.

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EXPLANATORY.

THE reader should know the circumstances which gave birth to this book. They were peculiar and interesting. An aged minister—the Rev. Daniel Lord, D. D., of the State of New York—wrote a letter urging its preparation and publication. It was a letter from a stranger to a stranger; for the writer and receiver of it had never met. Why it was written to the author of this book, rather than to someone else, cannot be explained except upon the supposition that God so ordered. The conditions prescribed for the task, and to which a strict conformity was demanded, were as follows: All personal prejudices, preferences, and ideas were to be put aside; all known opinions of men, together with all existing books were to be ignored; and no human aid was to be sought or received. Literally and exclusively the Bible was to be the only source of information, with prayerful and submissive seeking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God.

Under these conditions, the question to be studied and answered was: *What is God's own idea of His Church?*

It will be readily realized that a proposition so guarded and limited, seemed not only most difficult, but well-nigh beyond response, except in a rejection. The education, preferences, and beliefs of many years are not easily abandoned nor forgotten. Therefore, at first, all thought of compliance was rejected. But it was soon found that the matter was not to be thus disposed of. It refused to be slighted. It became, in time as a haunting presence which would not away. More and more forcefully it demanded

attention, until it became hourly insistent. Finally, as if under compulsion, the studies were begun, yet with many doubts as to the result, in view of the seeming impossibilities. Progress developed interest; interest grew into eagerness, and eagerness into overmastering enthusiasm which became impatiently jealous of interruption, until the time needed for eating and sleeping was regarded as almost wasted. Physical and mental being seemed made new and incapable of weariness. It was a new experience—a strange life into which the student came. Months grew into years as the work of gathering and arranging the materials went forward. When that was finished, other months and years were spent in renewed studies, and in revisions. With no human aid or counsel, no visible companion and helper but the Bible (in Hebrew, Greek and English), what was undertaken as a task became a labor of love and inexpressible pleasure. Doubtless many, if not all, into whose hands this volume may fall, will regard with some suspicion the attempt to meet the imposed conditions. Be it so! It became a mission which had to be accomplished! We do not pretend to have "made a success" of it. But certainly, the honest effort has been to put these pages together as with a rivet forged under the hammer of God's Word. The only sources of information sought, were the writings of "the holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Considering all things, the difficulties of such an undertaking in the midst of full ministerial work—as a Pastor, at first; then as a Synodical Evangelist—were great, and it were vain to hope, and veriest presumption to assert that no faults will be found. Indeed, if no shortcomings shall appear, that will be a greater surprise than the discovery of many. It is only asked that the reader will try to put himself in the author's place, and so learn

to be very charitable. Not a few sentences which can be read in a moment, cost the writer days, weeks, months, of studious care and thought. Sometimes, nearly all, or the whole Bible had to be searched in order safely to write a few words which, after being read, may not seem to be of much worth. But such searching of the Scriptures was necessary—not to find something new—but to record the truth of God, as we, at least, wished and tried to do, correctly. The "common version" has been adhered to so far as it was possible to do it, but sometimes it was found necessary to appeal to the "original," or Holy Spirit's language. Departures from the translation do not, in any case, affect it so far as it presents the essential doctrines of salvation, nor were those doctrines within the special line of these studies. Any examination will show that, as has been often said, none need fear that any new translation can affect those doctrines.

The author endeavored to refrain from expressing personal views, and from "comments," until foregoing studies had, as he believed, discovered the will of God. But always, after finding a "Thus saith the Lord," there is liberty of speech for all.

And now the work is sent forth upon its mission of service to the Church, with the prayer that God may use it as may be good in His sight. If criticisms and complaints come, they will be accepted in "good part" and without astonishment. If they do not come, it will be remembered that someone says, "The unexpected always happens."

One thing more we wish to say, and with emphasis: In all this work, there is not even the shadow of a thought of conflicting with or ignoring the results of the scholarship of the Church. Indeed, no pretension, whatever, to scholarship is here made. The dealing is with facts only, as they seem to be developed in the course of the studies of the

records. If there comes any antagonism to received views, every reader has the unquestionable and recognized right to reject what he cannot accept. The author does not dare to dictate to any, nor assume to be wiser than others. But free thought and speech are, for all, inalienable. No one is fettered to walk in a "rut" only because others preceding him have made it. The Master is the Christ, and His Interpreter is the Holy Spirit. With these none may disagree; but unquestioning submission to the opinions of mere men, is slavery.

THE AUTHOR.

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BENEDICTION.

BIBLE CHURCH STUDIES.

[Please take note of the preceding Explanation before reading this book.—THE AUTHOR.]

CHAPTER I.

PREPARATORY.

The new study—The question before us—The Church as now seen—Various claims—Harmonizing differences—General definition of Church—The Church from God—Questions for examination—Trial of differing doctrines—Creeds—Sincerity and honesty.

THE Reader may have engaged in some such course of study as that now before him; but to the writer it is beyond anything heretofore undertaken, in many respects. This is our first study of the whole Bible altogether *apart from any human helps*, such as commentaries or other works. How shall we begin? This chapter is preparatory. One must learn how and where to start in an untried path. Just where to enter, is the first thing to be ascertained. Let us, then, clearly understand the object in view.

The question to be answered is: What is God's own idea of His Church? We are not to give direct study to the more spiritual side of the question. Our aim is to ascertain the Origin, Constitution, and Earthly Life of the Church. It is the Visible Church, only, with which we have to do here.

Again: The answer to our question is not to be sought in any human sources, whatever. The student is to strive to put aside all he may think that he knows, and

bury all prejudices. The Word of God is to be, literally and exclusively, the source of information. The utterances of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, are to be so absolutely the guide that, so to speak, "His voice may be seen and the work of His fingers heard." What is thus discovered is to appear in these studies, as the teaching of God, regardless of any other consideration.

We begin by accepting the Church as *a fact!* It is here! But it stands before us in divisions. These are called "denominations." Each claims Divine Origin, and appeals to the Word of God as the authority for its "faith and manners." With all sincerity these claims are made, and are maintained with earnestness. None may doubt, and all should respect the honesty of convictions in each case.

It is also true that some restiveness exists among the denominations. In one way or another, Christians deplore the seemingly necessary fact of divisions, and of late much has been said and written—perhaps more has been thought, along this line. Many believe that a cordial outward union (which we will call oneness) of God's people as a visible body, is desirable and would be Scripturally right. Others doubt. Questions arise; and opinions are as numerous as questions. And who can wonder that each has great respect for his own views?

If the oneness is to come, it will not be under the rule of any existing Creed; nor can the "faith and manners" of any one denomination, as such, be the rallying point. If any say: "Oneness will be easy if all will come to us," that may be true, but not acceptable to the "all." Indeed, it has a "smack" of bigotry to which no ecclesiastical palate is likely to respond kindly. Certainly, any such idea must be utterly barren of good in every direction. It must be "crucified"! The "sectarian" must die, virtually or in fact. The slave to "historical evidences" must become a freeman. The "sheep" must follow the

call of no voice from among themselves. All must listen for the call of the "One Shepherd" of the "one fold," to whom they all belong. Such things must be before a visible oneness, even if desirable, can be possible. So common-sense says. There are vast difficulties in the way, among which educational influences and convictions stand preëminent. It has always been so. The Jews were educated to expect the Messiah to appear as a temporal Prince, glorious and invincible, for their deliverance from the yoke of Rome. During not less than three years our Lord taught His disciples of Himself and His mission; yet how slow were they to understand! Even after His resurrection they seemed to be still thinking that His chief work was to "restore the kingdom unto Israel," Acts i, 6: so difficult was it for even the Divine Teacher to uproot educational beliefs, and to implant truth in their stead. Only the baptism "with the Holy Spirit" sufficed to clear the understandings of those whom Jesus taught! How, then, can any mere man be a reformer if the "reform," for which many hope, is to come? Who will be accepted as representative of all, to answer even one question: "What is the Visible Church?" Yet that is what we want to know. It is the question of these studies. Doubtless all will, for the moment, accept a general answer: "The Visible Church is a body of people professing the faith, and organized for the worship and service of God, according to the Scriptures." But have we not several bodies so professing and organized? Which is, in fact, Scriptural? Certainly there is not one harmonious, visible organization of all of God's people; but there are several visible bodies claiming to be of the Scriptural Church; yet these are sometimes in controversy about the truth as each interprets it while reading the same Bible! Is not this true? How can one know what to think, in hearing the claims of each? Can it be that all are in accord with one standard—the Word of God? Or is there in all an intermixture of Divine and human? If there is a partial likeness to the Divine

original in all, may not one have more than another? If so, which is most near to the idea of God about His Church? It is but "human" that each body should answer: "The strongest evidence is on our side." For does not each sect believe in God as the Father of its "faith and manners"? But there are two questions which we may find it hard to answer with a clean, impartial honesty, namely:

1. Did God's Word, really and alone, lead us to our church-views?

2. Did we adopt our views first, then seek God's Word for warrant and confirmation?

The second question may not be popular; but an honest man should face and study it. This because—do we say too much?—with many, "truth" is what they have accepted, possibly without diligent search of the Scriptures. How much had educational and other influences to do with shaping us? A proverb says: "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes." To say the least, exceptions are rare. It is very natural to believe that what we think is right. "You did," and "I didn't," have had many a hard fight because neither liked to feel, or be proved in the wrong. And yet a thing may not be right just because we have always held it to be so. The Bible speaks of differing doctrines: Doctrines of God; of men; of devils; and "divers and strange doctrines," Matthew xv, 9; Mark vii, 7; Colossians ii, 22; 1 Timothy iv, 1; Hebrews xiii, 9. In the last-named passage a more literal translation of the Greek is: "Various and strange teachings,"—teachings foreign to God's Word, and differing in themselves, yet advanced by some. Our choice is to be made between the four kinds—those of God; men; devils, and the "strange." In fact there are but two: those of God, and those not of God. In choosing, we cannot depend upon human wisdom, for the very wisest men may err. What shall we do? The disciple whom Jesus loved said, in his old age: "Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they

are of God." Why? "Because many false prophets are gone out into the world." But how may we know which are true? "Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God," 1 John iv, 1, 2. Evidently this confession means the "obedience of faith," accepting Jesus Christ as proclaimed in the Gospel. He is revealed as the Head of the Church, to whom every thought is to be brought into subjection, 2 Corinthians x, 5. Therefore must the whole being of His followers be controlled by His Spirit. This being so, he who would know the will of God, which Jesus came to teach, must be as a sheet of blank paper waiting to receive the writing; and this without addition or subtraction as the impress comes from the inspired Word of God through the Holy Spirit. In what other way can we find the true answer to our question? To submit here is to achieve a very great triumph—greater in proportion to difficulty,—a triumph over self. To fear, or avoid this test is to confess uncertainty that we are right; or manifest the presence of bigotry. Do we "try the spirits,"—examine the "credentials" of those who come as teachers from God? We do not mean that everyone is to be required "to show his papers," but that, in obedience to God, we must ascertain that our teachers are "faithful men" according to His Word; men free from "doctrines of devils" and "doctrines of men." Do not all know that fluent speech and fine powers of entertainment may exist without sound doctrine? Is it not notably true that error may lurk behind high position and marked ability? Such recommendations cannot compensate for absence of conformity to the revealed requirements of God. The "spirits" must be tried! The mere fact that some appear as leaders in God's service, is not a reason for our following. Even "the fathers"—whom we reverence as great and good men—were and are, after all, only men. Not one is to be trusted as infallible. To accept a thought only because they shaped it, is to abandon our allegiance to

Christ—the one Head of the Church and Lord of its doctrines. The poet tells of

> "Bigots, who but one way see—
> Through the blinkers of authority."

This "authority" means the mere opinions and "commandments" of accepted leaders. While generally deserving credit and confidence, it is not impossible that some may have erred. Yet their teachings may have become as the law of God to their followers. And so "bigots" are born. Ever, they are most numerous among those who accept human leadership without testing the doctrines by the Word of God. They are slaves to a "creed." Creeds we must have, and they merit respect if Scriptural. Those who ignore them are bigots as to their own opinions. But no man who professes any faith at all, can be creedless. Each has his own system of theology, whether conscious of it or not; and that is his "creed" which he may hold in bigotry.

The Church should have its teachers and leaders. They are ordained of God, and are so to be treated. Still it is right, yea, it is obligatory, under God's law, to try them "whether they are of God." The Church is here to teach the world; but its teachings must be of God, not of "churchmen." A teacher of religious doctrines may be able to see only "through the blinkers of authority" put upon him by those whose pupil he was; or he may have formulated a system of his own for special ends, or under certain influencing circumstances. Such the Church may accept, or some part of it may indorse without a full realization of the fact that truth is not in human opinions, however well and plausibly sustained; but in the actual teachings of God's Word precisely voiced by human teachers. In Ephesians iv, 14, Paul speaks of some who worked "craftiness, with a view to the (μεθοδειαν—methodeian) systematizing of error." Is it because of such that the world sometimes complains; then becomes skeptical? Can

it be blamed for asking: "Which is the true light?" when many differing lights shine? What are denominations? Each is as a man with a lantern, the glass of which is of a preferred color in the individual cases. No two show exactly the same kind of light, for the shining is through the preferred colors. In all, one special color may appear; but there are other colors tinting that one and held (by the lantern-carriers) as essential for right guidance.

Someone has said: "The churches are like faces—so many expressions of life, and not one perfect." To this we may add, And no two exactly alike. Now the world may argue, "Since all claim to be right, yet no two agree, none are right." Thus Pilate's question—"What is truth?"—may be asked by others who, like him, will not wait for an answer. In calmly thinking of this matter, we must feel that though the world is sometimes prone to criticise the Church sharply, there is, in the divided and controversial condition of the Church, only too much reason for its skepticism. One question, "Are all the denominations right?", naturally begets another, "Are any of them right?" What God made is His. Which of the "Churches" did He make? If, as all agree, He is the Author of the "Church," it is His. He is its Creator and Lawgiver. Did He make the "denominations," also? Did our divisions originate in the one God and His one Book? Such inquiries do but voice the natural feelings of men, when thoughtful about our question. Our studies will be to find God's own response, and we intend to accept that, lead where it may. We close this chapter with four thoughts:

I. Sincerity and error may sometimes be very near neighbors, dwelling together in peace. The sincere, honest man has often been the mistaken man. So was Saul of Tarsus, Acts ix, xxvi; 1 Timothy i. (See our Chapter XXII). Our Lord said that even persecution of His people unto death would, in some cases, be considered a service to God. John xvi, 2. On the plea of sincerity the most degraded heathen can justify their idol-worship, etc.

II. Things plausible are not always things right and true. Moses warned against men whose teachings seemed to come from God, yet did not, Deuteronomy xiii, 1–4. See also 1 John iv, 1.

III. Success and prosperity are not, in themselves, proof of righteousness. Wrong and error have often flourished. Paul taught in 1 Corinthians iii, 1–15, that men may build upon the right foundation, but use wrong materials which will spoil, and finally cause the loss of the whole building.

IV. Earnestness is not always safe evidence that truth is present in the work. Not seldom men have fought harder and more readily for their own ideas and prejudices than for God's truth.

What then? There is but one safe guide. Light is from the sun. Truth is from Christ. He is "the Sun of Righteousness." He said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. To this end was I born, that I might bear witness unto the truth. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness; but shall have the light of life. If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." But how are we to know that truth, since he is not personally with us? He said, John xvi, 13, 14, "When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." The Word of God is given to us by that Holy Spirit. Therefore in studying it as He gave it we shall know the truth. Ought we to hesitate to enter upon these studies, lest some dear error be unveiled, or some cherished idol be overthrown? Again we say: To shrink from the test is to confess uncertainty that we are right. Our thought is, that every Christian should desire to know God's will, rather than to have his own prejudices confirmed.

And now we intend to find and record that will of God, if a work of prayer and patience can do so!

CHAPTER II.

THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

The word, "Church"—Rule of study—Church; one or many?—Composition of the Church—The "body of Christ"—Body, or bodies?—Kingdom of God; of Heaven—Character of Church—When created?—Pentecost—Worshipers—Synagogue; "Ekklêsia;" both were churches.

IN the preceding chapter we accepted the Visible Church as a fact. It is seen by the world, and is often mentioned in the New Testament, though not under this title. But it would seem (as things now are) that a better phrase is, "visible churches," inasmuch as there is no one visible organization embracing all the professed people of God. Still, as we find the word in both singular and plural, we will thus study it. What, then, is the Divine idea about the Church? The Greek word translated, "church," is *εκκλησια* (ekklêsia). But it does not instruct us as to the nature or character of the church. The word "ekklêsia" means any sort of assembly—secular, spiritual, orderly, disorderly; any crowd of people, no matter for what reason or purpose assembled. Plainly, then, we can learn nothing from the Greek word for our satisfaction. Where the English word originated is a question. Some derive it from the Greek, *κυριακος* (kuriakos), which means, "belonging or pertaining to a lord," etc. It is thought that this word was carried to the Goths by Greek missionaries; that the Goths carried it to German tribes; that the Germans turned it into "kirche"; that the Anglo-Saxons, getting it, transformed it into "circ," or "circe"; that the Scotch made it "kirk" (to which they still hold); and, finally, that our nearer English ancestors—among whom our common version was made—adopted "church." This, however, is outside our studies. No matter what the origin, the word is in general use to denote an assembly of people professing the faith of the Bible, and who are organized for worship and service as followers of the Christ of God.

A house, used for their worship, is also called a "church." But in neither Greek nor Hebrew do we find any one word which, apart from its connections, must be translated "church." As an example of the use of "ekklêsia," see Acts xix, 32–39, where the word is used to describe an unlawful, riotous mob. Seeing, then, that the word as found in the Bible languages cannot benefit us, we must study the character of the people called "ekklêsia," and thus learn when the Church is meant. In other words, we must look for the *thing* rather than the *name*. By observing the connections we can proceed safely. Thus in Acts xx, 28, we read of "the (ekklêsia) Church of God which he purchased with his own blood." Some of the best manuscripts give *Κυριος* (KURIOS — lord), in this verse, instead of *Θεος* (THEOS — God), making the reading "the church of the Lord." We think this correct, especially as it is sustained by facts, as in Ephesians v, 25, etc., where we are taught that our Lord Jesus Christ "loved the church and gave himself for it." That the Apostle was writing of the Visible Church will, presently, be seen. But what was and is this "Church of the Lord," as to its visible existence? One body in unity? or does it exist in disunited parts having some unseen connection? We must necessarily speak of "the Church," or of "the Churches"; the former being considered as one body; the latter as several independent bodies. The passage just quoted says "Church," as if the "ekklêsia" of Paul's day was one body. But in what city, of today, is the Church so seen to exist? So in Acts xx, 17, we read of "the Church" at Ephesus; and in Verse 28, it is called "the Church of God." Now it is clear that the Church there was a visible body; for the (*πρεσβυτερους*—presbuterous) elders or presbyters had the care of it, being exhorted to be "faithful (*επισκοπους*—episkopous) overseers" of it. Its members must have been of the citizens of that city, and known by those elders who were to "feed" them in spiritual things as "the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers." The

duties could not have been discharged to members of an invisible body with whom those elders were not in daily association as recognized persons. Further, the fact, that the elders were charged with the oversight of those members shows that they were still imperfect and dependent beings. Had not that been so, what need of the fostering care enjoined? Proof of their imperfection is also seen in the Apostle's exhortations throughout his epistle to that Church, exhortations touching almost every duty in life. When we see the character of the teachings given in that epistle, we may well believe that those Ephesian Christians did honor to their profession as followers of Christ; and we may assume that they were of the Invisible Church, which is composed of all the redeemed of God. Yet it is just as evident that they were a visible body existing on the earth, they and their elders, such beings as we are.

But did that church stand alone in the world as an independent body? And did it differ from other organizations at other points, in "faith and manners"? Other churches are mentioned in the records, and each is spoken of as "the body of Christ." This strikes us as a peculiar expression, standing alone in its meaning. It is not identical with "the body of Jesus," which means the human body in which God dwelt when Jesus came as the Christ, and in which He wrought out the plan of salvation.

No part of the Church is ever called "the body of Jesus." It is the "body of Christ," and He is its head. The term "body of Christ," therefore, must mean His spiritual body, and only that. Its members are His members, and, as our Apostle says, "members one of another." See Romans xii, 5; 1 Corinthians vi, 15; xii, 12–27; Ephesians iv, 5–30. In other passages we read: "We, being many, are one body in Christ. For as the (human) body is one, and hath many members and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or (Ἕλληνες—Hellênes) Greeks;

whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members (εκ μερους—ek merous) individually."

It is also said that Christ is given "to be head over all things to the church, which is His body." Again: "Now ye are the body of Christ." In Ephesians iv, 4, "There is one body, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." In Colossians i, 18, 24, "He is the head of the body, the church;" and, "for His body's sake, which is the church." Now if the "body of Christ" meant an independent organization at each place mentioned, we would expect sometimes to read of "the *bodies* of Christ." But that phrase never occurs. Why is it, then, that only the singular number is used? And if many bodies exist scripturally, how shall we understand 1 Corinthians xii? In Verse 20, "many members," yet only "one body." In Verses 24, 25, "God hath tempered the body together—that there should be no schism in the body." In Verse 27, "Now ye (the church members) are the body of Christ." Again: If "Christ is the head of the body," of *which* body? At Rome? At Corinth? At Ephesus? At Colosse? or where? Each organization is called "the body of Christ," and the members at each place were members of His body. So we read; but what are we to understand? We have studied the problem very earnestly and carefully. Our conclusion is this: As the illustration is the human body, in which all the members unite to make the one body, and in the one body are all vitally joined to the one head, so of Christ and the Church. Every organization is a member, "individually," of the body—the Church; and it unites with all the other organizations in making the whole Church; and each, as a part of the one body—the Church—is vitally joined to the one head, Christ. If this is not a right conclusion, then we can make nothing of what the Apostle says.

Again: We read of "the kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven," but we find no mention of "kingdoms of God," or of heaven.

Why is this? These terms must, sometimes, mean the Visible Church; for things are said in connection which cannot apply to the Church Invisible. See Matthew xiii; xviii, 15–17, 23–35; 1 Corinthians v, 1–5, etc. In Matthew xxii, a guest is cast out from the "marriage supper," into "outer darkness." Are any ever cast out of the Invisible Church? See also the parables of Matthew xxv. It seems beyond doubt that the Visible Church is meant. In 1 John ii, 18, 19, we read of "antichrists," as having been members of the organization to which John and others belonged; but they forsook it because they were not real Christians; or, as John says, "They were not of us." That organization was, therefore, a mixed body at one time, having some unbelievers among its members. Thus Paul's words apply: "There must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you," 1 Corinthians xi, 19.

One may ask: Why should the holy God recognize, as His Church, an organization having imperfect, and even false members? At present we have no answer. We simply record what we find, as we go.

But where, when, and how did this Church come to be? As we find it in the New Testament history, the question arises: Was it a creation of that period? To create, is to bring into being something which did not before exist. In another sense, it is to bring together in new combinations what already existed. The latter meaning must apply here; for, as individuals of our race compose the Church, the race must have been created before the Church could be organized. Its beginning was at some time in God's dealing with mankind.

As the Book of Acts is the history of the Church in apostolic times, we cannot find a better point at which to begin our studies.

The events which made one "day of Pentecost" forever memorable, seem worthy of first attention. In Acts ii, 41, we read: "And the same day were added about

three thousand souls." (The words, "unto them," in our common version, are not in the Greek, but were supplied by the translators.) On that day we surely see church services and work. But what are we to understand as to church-existence? The word, "added," attracts our attention. To what, or to whom were "the three thousand" added? To the "one hundred and twenty" disciples who were constantly in prayer and other religious exercises, after the Lord's ascension? They were, according to His command (Acts i), awaiting the promised baptism "with the Holy Spirit." Were they an organized body of worshipers? Would they now be called a church? or regarded as of the Church? Did our Lord live His earthly ministry through without a Church? But those disciples were not the first true worshipers of God, nor the first accepted believers in Christ. Preceding records show others recognized of God, as in Luke i, 1–10, where God's minister, Zacharias, is seen leading the services for the people in the great national house of worship—the temple—while the congregation attended in prayerful reverence. That was about thirty-three years before the day of Pentecost of Acts ii, and seems to have been according to the customs of the people. Before our Lord's crucifixion, He and His disciples frequented the temple and synagogues as places of stated religious services. This all know. The records also show that Jesus had many believing followers throughout the land, before His crucifixion. His maltreatment and crucifixion are not contrary evidence. Attentive study sees how all that evil was brought on Him. It was not the wish and will of the people. The dominating rulers and theologians of the time accomplished all by consummate trickery, and by most flagrant violation of their own state and church laws; see Matthew xxvi, 3–5; Luke iv, 42; v, 1; viii, 40; xix, 47, 48; xx, 19; xxii, 2; John viii, 31; Acts iv, 21; v, 13; etc.

The climax of trickery, which insured success to their schemes, was in changing the indictment to treason against the Roman government, thus placing Jesus within Roman

jurisdiction and, so, beyond any interference on the part of the people, who, but for that move, would (as we think) have rescued Him. An attempt to take Him from the Roman court would have been treated as riot and rebellion which the Roman soldiers were only too ready to suppress with every cruelty. A most bitter experience had taught the people to dread the weight of Rome's mailed hand. True, many, were opposed to Jesus; but our reading of the records is, that the majority of the people were His friends if not His followers. (More of this hereafter.) Apart from the immediate followers of Jesus, God had a host of true worshipers among the Jews; and there was also another host of false professors. There is food for thought in the teachings of John the Baptist about the mission of Jesus; and also in the prophecies of Malachi iii and iv. He was never represented as coming to originate a church, or a kingdom; but He was to *correct and reform.* There were two classes of Jews:

I. The επειθουντες (epeithountes)—the disobeying, whose prejudice engendered incorrigible unbelief. They were cast out in the reformation which our Lord wrought.

II. The επειθησαν (epeithesan)—those obedient to the faith. They were retained by our Lord and His Apostles, and were always recognized. See the distinction, Acts xiv, 1, 2; xvii, 4, 5; xix, 9. It is seen also on that day of Pentecost, Acts ii, 5–13. Our Lord's public life was developing this distinction, and it came to its fullness under the subsequent apostolic work. We will see more of this hereafter.

In Acts ii, 47, the word "added" occurs again, as if to explain its use in Verse 41—"The Lord added to the church, daily, those who (σωζομενους—sōzomenous) were being saved." We judge therefore that the church must have already been in existence, for how could any be added to what did not exist before the addition? But, (following our rule of seeking the *thing*, rather than a name,) we find the Church prior to that day of Pentecost. The records speak of reverent, regular assemblies worshiping God. No

commands are found enjoining such service, so far as our studies have extended; yet we find abundant indications that such was the established custom of the nation, and there is every appearance of the prevalence of settled principles of religion and of a universal practice of its duties. Each assembly had its officers and its courses and times for regular Divine services. On the Sabbath days the Scriptures were read and expounded to the people, with great regularity and care; and our Lord showed His approval of all by attending and often taking official part in the services during His life on earth. The many places, or houses of worship were called "synagogues." Luke iv, 15, 28; John xviii, 19–21. Everything tends to prove that organized bodies of worshipers had existed from time immemorial; nor can the church-character of those assemblies be at all doubted.

Why the word "Church" was not used by our translators in speaking of them, is not easily explained. The Greek word *συναγωγη* (sunagōgê) has more exclusively a spiritual meaning than has "ekklêsia." In James ii, 2, "sunagōgê" is translated by "assembly." Why there, and not elsewhere? It seems to have been a matter of prejudice, or of preference that the Greek form of the word was elsewhere retained. Before our Lord's ascension the word "sunagōgê" meant just what "ekklêsia" was made to mean afterwards,—with the single exception, that the former word denoted (as applied to people) worshipers *expecting* the Christ, and the latter was applied to those who professed to have received the Christ *who had come.* For centuries, "sunagōgê" was restricted to Jewish worshipers; for God had no other people on earth. But during apostolic work Gentiles often worshiped with Jews, as in Acts xiii. The substitution of "ekklêsia" may have been intended to mark the change from the Old to the New Dispensation. We may reasonably ask, however: Was an organized body of worshipers less God's Church, when called "sunagōgê," instead of "ekklêsia"? We cannot think that all the expectation looking to the Christ, in Israel, meant nothing.

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST IN ISRAEL.

No Church organization—Matthew xvi, 18; "this rock;" the "keys"—Paul and Peter—"Church in the wilderness"—Israel being educated—Paul and Moses—Old Testament faith, Hebrews xi—"Saints"—Note on Israel borrowing from Egyptians.

HOW much was Christ in Israel, and in the faith of the people? And how long had faith been looking to Him? These inquiries have much to do with our subject. During His sojourn on earth, our Lord lived in Israel as a Jew. We find no church-organizing work done by Him during that time. His first mention of the Church, is in Matthew xvi, 18. When Peter uttered his great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus answered: "Thou art (*Πετρος*—Petros) Peter, and upon this (petra) rock I will build my church; and the gates (*ἅδου*—hadou) of hades shall not prevail against it." What did he mean? At first sight this may have somewhat the appearance of church organization, or of a promise for it. Examination of the words corrects any such idea. Our study is as follows:

I. The Greek for Peter is "Petros"; meaning, "a stone, a fragment of rock."

II. The Greek for "rock," is "petra"; meaning, "large rock, mass, or bed-rock."

III. The two words not only differ in meaning, but also in form and gender.

"Petros,"—masculine gender,—is "a stone, fragment," etc. "Petra,"—feminine gender,— is "large rock, mass-rock, bed-rock" upon which a house could be built. The two words, so far as we can discover, are never confounded by good writers or speakers.

IV. Our Lord was to build His Church upon the "*petra*,"—foundation-rock, not upon "Petros,"—the stone, or fragment. It is thus seen that (Petros) Peter was not the foundation meant in the promise; and so the facts prove. For the Scriptures represent Christ, only,—or "the faith of Christ"—as the foundation upon which the Church stands. Therefore the words of Jesus refer to the truth in Peter's confession. In Romans ix, 33, Paul quotes Isaiah xxvii, 16,—"Behold, I lay in Zion a (*λιθον*—lithon) stone of stumbling and a (petra) rock of offence." Beyond doubt this refers to Christ. In 1 Corinthians x, 4, he says of Israel in the wilderness: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual (petras) rock which followed them; and that (petra) rock was Christ." Every such record shows the meaning of "petra" in Matthew xvi. In 1 Peter ii, 8, also, Christ is called "a (lithos) stone of stumbling, and a (petra) rock of offence." Thus, Isaiah, Paul, and Peter give the same meaning and testimony. The word "petros" is never applied to Christ; nor is the word "petra" ever applied to Peter. We have looked at every passage in the New Testament, where the words are used. When foundation-rock is meant, "petra" is used; whenever Christ is called "a stone," the word "lithos" is used,—never "petros." For example, see Acts iv, 11; Romans ix, 33. 1 Peter ii, 6–8. In Matthew vii, 24, 25, the wise man built his house upon a "petra," foundation-rock. See also Luke vi, 48; viii, 13, etc. The proof is positive and abundant that our Lord did not say nor mean that He would build His Church upon (petros) Peter. Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," is the great, essential doctrine—the "Rock"—on which the Church stands.

V. The word, "build," in this passage, is "*οικοδομεω*" (oikodomeō), meaning "to build up, to edify in the faith," etc. See 1 Corinthians viii, 1; x, 23, etc. Like many other Greek words, it has several uses, and it is often necessary to study connections and subjects in order to know

just what the meaning is. We must ascertain facts, then interpret in accordance with them. That is as we think, the great rule for interpretation. We know the meaning of "petra," in this passage, by comparing the declaration of Jesus with the facts found in the Scriptures.

A representative statement is made by Paul in 1 Corinthians iii, 11: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Now if our passage has this Scripture-meaning, it applies to the—then—future of the Church *already founded upon*, and *to be built up* upon Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." It cannot, therefore, mean a first organization, but is a statement of that upon which the very existence and growth of the Church depends. The Church was not spoken of as if just coming into being. Soon after Peter's confession, Jesus again spoke of the Church as then existing; visible; and in working condition; see Matthew xviii, 17. Certain steps were to be taken with an offending brother. These failing, Jesus said, "Tell it unto the Church." But the Church could not hear the case unless in existence as an organized body. That is plain. So our question, "When was the Church organized?" finds no answer thus far. We do not wish to make any hasty decisions, and we have a warning against doing so, in this very chapter, Matthew xvi, in connection with other records. We have learned that single verses, or detached passages should not be the sole dependence for doctrine. Here we read that Jesus told Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." This looks as if all church-power on earth was vested in Peter. But reading on a little further, we see that the very same authority was given to all the disciples, Matthew xviii, 18; John xx, 23. The records cover the time before and after our Lord's crucifixion. When, after rising from the dead, He came to those disciples, "He breathed upon them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit." Then He added: "Whose sins soever ye remit, they are

remitted unto them; and whose sins soever ye retain, they are retained." Thus all the disciples were endowed with power upon full equality with Peter. Words cannot be plainer, in any statement. Therefore Peter never was made the superior of others. What is true of one is true of all. Taking all the teachings of Scripture in connection with what has been seen, we conclude that these records mean no more nor less than our Lord's ordination of His disciples to be his representatives on earth. Paul expresses the truth in 2 Corinthians v, 20, in the words, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." An ambassador is a representative, or messenger of his government. In this character these Apostles were to declare the will, decisions and doctrines of Christ who sent them forth with His instructions. They were to speak and act in His name—by His authority—not of their own will or wisdom. So they were to teach others to observe whatsoever things He had commanded them, Matthew xxviii, 20. They received no power to go, in word or deed, beyond the delivery of their Lord's will as taught by Him. They could *declare* what He had said. As taught by Him, they could say what sins were forgiven, and what were "retained," but only as speaking for Him. And never do we find them transgressing these bounds. The power of the "keys" does not exceed the *declarative* work of the "ambassador" speaking in the name of Him whom he represents. If what he declares is according to the will of God—whether in its first utterance by our Lord, or in the recorded words of the Holy Spirit—the *message* has the authority of God, but the *messenger*, in himself, has no more authority than any other man. Upon this "platform" Peter, himself, always stood. His doctrine was: "Whosoever believeth in him (Christ) hath remission of sins," Acts x, 43. He never assumed personal authority to forgive the sins of any. "Repentance and remission of sins" were preached in the name of Christ, only, whether by Peter or

other Apostles, Luke xxiv, 47; Acts xiii, 38. In Acts ii, we see the first recorded preaching under that authority. To Christ alone, the preacher (Peter) pointed then and always; and his message was: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts iv, 12. Did he know? His epistles, written years afterwards, show that he still maintained that doctrine. That he had no thought of superiority, is seen in 1 Peter v, 1, where he called himself, "συμπρεσβυτερος (sumpresbuteros), a fellow-elder" of those to whom he wrote. So in 2 Peter iii, 2, he claimed equality, only, with the other Apostles.

It is worthy of note that in almost the next moment after Peter's reception of his commission (Matthew xvi, 23) our Lord rebuked him in the same terms addressed to the devil at the end of the "forty days" of temptation, see Matthew iv, 10. To the devil Jesus said: "Get thee hence, Satan." To Peter He said: "Get thee behind me, Satan;" and the reason, in both cases, was opposition to the will of God. It is also known that Peter was the most guilty of all, in his blasphemous denial of our Lord. He used "oaths and curses"! So much for the possible thought that Peter was made greater than his brethren in the Church. We find Christ and the Church spoken of yet further back in Israel's history. In Acts vii, Stephen preached of "the Church in the wilderness,"—the Church of which Paul, also, wrote as having been followed by that "spiritual Rock—Christ." Thus, both indicate in plain terms, the existence of the Church at the time of that journey. This being so, we must look far back of the days of Jesus for the Church's origin. Stephen used the many-sided word, "ekklêsia." Therefore the character and surroundings, of those so designated, must be studied. And what do we see? A people set apart by Jehovah, Himself, under special commands that they recognize, worship, and serve Him; a holy tabernacle, to the door of which religious offerings were to be brought in seeking atonement for

sin; ordained and consecrated priests ministering before God in behalf of the people; severe penalties decreed of God for any neglect of religious duties; signs and wonders, testifying that God was near, even dwelling among the people and watching over the services of His sanctuary, these and many other things of which we are constrained to say: These could belong to nothing less than the Church of God. There we see a multitude of people divinely organized for the worship and service of the one living and true God. If we think the Holy Spirit's presence necessary to the existence of the Church, we find records of that presence far back of the New Testament times. He was among the people in the days of Moses and "the seventy elders," Numbers xi; and in the time of Joshua, Numbers xxvii, 18. He testified in the Prophets, Nehemiah ix, 30. He was omnipresent then, as now; Psalms cxxxix, 7. He was vexed by the house of Israel, Isaiah lxiii, 7-11; and in many other ways His holy presence was evidenced. See Ezekiel's prophecy, also.

Is Christ necessary to the existence of the Church? We know that Moses wrote and preached of Him, John i, 45; v, 46; Acts iii, 22; xxvi, 22, 23; and, as just seen, Stephen and Paul spoke of His being with "the Church in the wilderness." But, in studying the old history, we cannot think that all in the hosts of Israel were of the Church if it did exist at that time. For in Exodus xii, 38; we read that a "mixed multitude" accompanied Israel out of Egypt. It was they who "fell a-lusting"; and the "children of Israel, also, wept again," and followed their example; Numbers xi, 4. Doubtless descendants of that "mixed multitude" were with Israel all the journey through, with the Church (if it existed), but not of it, and being of literal heathen ancestry, they may have done much towards causing Israel to sin. And does Israel seem, as pictured on those pages, a people too sinful to be thought of as the people of God? It is written in 1 Corinthians x, 5, "But (εν τοις πλειοσιν—en tois pleiosin) with the most of them

God was not well pleased." What a history is in that one sentence. Our translators have given "many," as the meaning of the Greek word "pleiosin." The sad fact is, "With *most* of them God was not well pleased"; for lamentably few of them ever reached "the promised land." The "most" of that generation died by their sins, in the wilderness. Perhaps it was with Israel as it would have been with Sodom and Gomorrha, had "ten righteous men" been found in those cities; see Isaiah i, 9.

A "remnant" lived. All history tells of the great debt the Church owes to the "faithful few" always found. Was it because of a few righteous ones in Israel, that God called the sinful nation "my people"; and called Himself their God? Leviticus xx, 26; xxv, 55.

A reading of Leviticus xxv–xxxii, may somewhat lessen any tendency to place the Church of today in favorable contrast with those, seemingly, so sinful people. When God called upon them for voluntary contributions to build a place of worship, they responded so promptly and liberally (two most gracious features) that He actually had to command them to cease giving. They hasted to give much more than was needed. We have not heard of any likeness to that history in the modern Church. Faults are easily seen, especially in those called "God's people." (See note at end of chapter.)

Possibly Israel would not be so harshly judged if we would look, more carefully, for the good which did exist. We note two things:

I. God was leading and educating a host of recently emancipated slaves. They had lived all their days in the midst of heathen influences, and had been ruled most cruelly in a degrading bondage. What could be expected, all at once, under such circumstances even with God as the teacher? The marvel is that there were any good traits, at all, left in them. In their history may be seen an illustration of the truth, that the education of God's people is not by instantaneous miracles. The process of training is slow as to results.

An examination of the "laws of Moses" is suggestive of the difficulties in the way of Israel's improvement. It is not a just study which finds fault with even the most, seemingly, insignificant of those laws. God was separating that people from surrounding heathenism and all its idolatrous superstitions. Some of His laws may appear to be, from our standpoint, very singular, if not foolish and useless. But in studying them we ascertain that they were intended to wean from, or keep out some heathen practice whereby God was disowned, or ignored in favor of false gods and their service. Heathenism had greatly infected Israel, and it had to be educated out of them. The work needed to be vigorous, careful, and minute in details; and all the more so, because they were still surrounded by tempters, every other nation being heathen.

II. The Israelites were only human, as we are. If he who is without sin is "first to cast a stone," it will not be cast, John viii, 7.

These considerations are presented in answer to any cavil as to the possible existence of the Church in Israel.

In Romans ix, 6, Paul said: "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." The Church may exist in the midst of a very "crooked and perverse nation." Do not the records in Hebrew xi, embrace the history of the Israelites in the wilderness, and others before them? According to that chapter, multitudes in Israel were numbered with the saints of God. We cannot give it a thoughtful reading, and not believe that God had, in Israel, a people "looking unto Jesus" as we look. It is a history of faith-heroes! And how grandly Israel's leader stands out in the record! "By faith Moses, * * * * refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of reward." To a great multitude of others, also, the writer refers, saying: "These all died in the faith."

Is it not in every Bible? Has the Church of today a better record?

In Philippians iii, we read that Paul counted all things but "loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ"; and that for Christ he did suffer the "loss of all things." Did Moses stand on a lower plane when he chose to lose all things for the same Christ to whom he, also, was looking? And what was the "recompense of reward" which lured him to turn his back upon the splendid Egyptian prospects, so full of tempting power? From the days of Abraham's knowledge of Christ (John viii, 56–58) the movement of faith had been onward to the things of Christ which caused the desires of Moses to soar above the richest earthly gains. Of the old saints we read: "They sought a better country, even an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." So "they endured as seeing Him who is invisible." Did not the eyes of their faith look, as ours do, to Him of whom Moses wrote? Deuteronomy xviii, 15; John v, 46, etc. When the Apostle says that "Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt" how shall we not regard him as our brother in Christ? If there is other meaning—than that Moses was a real believer in our Saviour—why put our Lord's name in such connection in the history of a man who had not the faith of Christians? "The reproach of Christ" and the "treasures of Egypt" are contrasted in the practical life of Moses when he cast in his lot with the people of God who were those Israelites in Egypt, for God had no other people, and that choice put Moses *in fellowship with them.* Therefore as in being a choice of Israel it was a choice of Christ, what can we conclude but that Christ was in that Israel? Was there no understanding, in those days, of the prophecy in Genesis xlix, 10, about "Shiloh" who should come? Were the sacrificial offerings ordained of God for the people, only unmeaning jugglery? Nay; when we see Moses on one side of Calvary—though so far away—and Paul on the

other side, choosing alike to suffer reproach and loss for the same Christ, we dare not disown one more than the other; nor can we find any teaching in "Holy Writ" which bids us to ignore the faith-heroes whose epitaph is the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews!

Looking through all the length and breadth of the history, we conclude that our Lord's words in Matthew xvi, 18, meant, "I will continue to build my Church." And is not this confirmed in Ephesians ii and iii, where Gentiles are told that the circumcised and the uncircumcised were made one by the blood of the one Christ who died for both, that those who were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world," were made "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God"? By every such record, the saints of the New Dispensation are seen to be but followers of those who, through faith and patience, obtained the Old Dispensation-promises. For in Hebrews xi, we are told that they, without us (of the New Dispensation) should not be made "perfect." Is not the bond of union in the one Christ? They were called "saints." Is the word understood?

In 1 Corinthians i, 1, 2, Paul writes (*κλητοις 'αγιοις*—klêtois hagiois) "called holy," or saints. The meaning is, called to the duty and privilege of being holy by consecration to God. They were set apart from common service, to the service of God. In Hebrews xii believers in Israel (whose history is in Hebrews xi), are called "so great a cloud of witnesses," or "martyrs," as the Greek word (*μαρτυρων*—marturōn) means. And who can feel that he is merely reading a eulogy of dead "ancients" when—after naming Abraham and others—the writer declares that time would fail him were he to try to tell of all those olden-day saints who—though we know they often sinned—wrought wonderously "through faith," and of whom "the world was not worthy"? And he says, further: "All these obtained a good report through faith." Can better historical

proof be given that they were believers in our own Christ? They only had promises whose fulfillment was very distant; yet they believed! Their faith had to look through the fires and smoke of centuries of sacrificial-altars, to the prophesied "Lamb of God" who was to be slain for their sins and who was only shadowed to them in his types; yet it looked! And what now? Our faith looks to the same "Lamb of God" who came and was slain for our sins. Is there other difference? How are we to understand all that has so far come before us, if the Church was not in Israel? But we must seek further for its origin, even if it were among that people. That Christ was in Israel, though only by spiritual presence, we cannot doubt. This seems clear, and may be counted as progress made.

NOTE ON ISRAEL'S BORROWING OF EGYPT.

We have heard harsh criticisms upon God and Israel, because of the borrowing (as it is called) of Egyptian jewelry, etc., Exodus xi, 2, 3, and xii, 35, 36. Hasty judgment and ignorance are at the bottom of those criticisms. The two are great, busy, and most harmful errorists. It must be acknowledged that our translators were not sufficiently careful as to the passages. The source of the common misunderstandings is in the misleading translation of the Hebrew word שָׁאַל (shāal). It does not mean to "borrow," in its primary use. Words in Eastern languages often begin with one meaning then wander off to others almost entirely different. It is so here. Our word means: "1. To question, to inquire. 2 To request, to pray for. 3. To borrow," etc. Now every just mind will say that the translation should have been according to "2" instead of "3." The meaning is, the Israelites prayed, or asked (begged, if you choose) the Egyptians for what the latter gave them, and that the things asked for were freely given. It was not a case of stealing, as many have supposed.

We are inclined to think that, in the great terror which was upon the Egyptians, they were quite willing to "pay" the Israelites to leave as quickly as possible. The record says that God gave Israel "favor" in the eyes of the Egyptians, so that they gave them all they asked for.

CHAPTER IV.

A NEW TESTAMENT STUDY.

Church in the New Testament—Test propositions—Paul our teacher—His teaching to Gentiles in Ephesians ii and iii — Was the Church in Israel?—Two peoples in contrast—"Joint partakers," etc.—Significance of Hebrews xi—Age of "The Commonwealth of Israel"—Covenants of promise—Paul's special mission.

STEPHEN'S words about "the Church in the wilderness," led us into a section of the Old Testament history of the Israelites; and our studies there left a strong conviction that the Church existed in Israel. We wish now to return to our starting-place, retrace our steps, and more carefully examine the reasons for this conviction that we may know if it be well founded. We began with the Church as a fact. It is mentioned more than one hundred times in the records of the New Testament. What we see there, is satisfactory as to church-existence, but we get no information as to its origin—that is, we do not find the organizing act. And now, as we return to this region of our studies, we frame two propositions, both of which cannot be true:

I. The Church was organized during the earthly sojourn of our Lord; or during the lives of His Apostles.

II. The Church was of Old Testament origin.

Which of these is the truth? This is a Gentile inquiry. As every important question should be referred to him who is best able to answer it, we take this one to the Apostle whom our Lord selected and commissioned as the special teacher of the Gentiles—our own race—and who in express terms styles himself "a teacher of the Gentiles." So we read in Acts xxii, 21; 1 Timothy ii, 7; 2 Timothy i, 11.

We note that the Greek word εθνη (ethnê) is often translated, "Gentiles." It really means "nations"—the

various peoples of the earth as distinguished from the Jewish nation. In Paul's day it was used to denote heathen, in contrast with Israelites who knew and worshiped the true God. Thus our Lord used the word in the Great Commission, Matthew xxviii, 19. As the chosen Apostle to the heathen of his time, Paul called himself, in Ephesians iii, 1, "The prisoner of Jesus Christ for you (ethnōn) nations." See also Galatians ii, 8. As he was thus positively commissioned, our duty to Christ is to receive and submit to the instructions of the teacher whom He chose for us. Therefore we propose to "sit at his feet" that he may guide us. Some of his teachings have already been touched. We now seek others.

In Ephesians iii, he speaks of a "mystery" which had been made known to him for Gentiles to whom he was writing. He says in Verse 5, that "in other (γενεαις, geneais) generations it was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his (God's) holy Apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Unquestionably, he meant that he—as one of the Apostles—had received special revelation and enlightenment as to that "mystery" which had not been so fully understood by those living in preceding generations. The revelation was: "That the (ethnê) nations should be fellow-heirs and of the same body, and partakers of his (God's) promise in Christ, by the gospel." The first verse of the chapter indicates a foregoing reason for what is written afterwards. Paul says, "For this cause." And what was that cause? The preceding chapter (ii, 1–10) speaks of the mercy of God which had brought salvation to those heathen Ephesians. What follows (from Verse 11 to the end of the epistle) seems intended to incite them to the very highest degree of Christian living. In Verses 11–22, are, as we may say, explanations of what is briefly stated in iii, 6. Evidently, the enumeration of privileges, to be remembered, was for the purpose of impressing the Ephesians with a deep sense of the (κλησεως—klêseōs) calling (iv, 1) wherewith they were

called, that they might be animated into effort to live "worthily" of it. We think that Ephesians ii, 11–22, has information of most weighty character. Therefore we give the passage a careful examination. To those Gentiles our Apostle says: "Wherefore, remember that ye being in time past, the (ethnê) heathen nations in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands (that is, Israel); that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who (ποτε—pote) once were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ; for he is our peace who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle-wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, (even) the law of commandments (contained) in ordinances, for to make in himself, of (tous duo) the two, one new man; so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access, by one Spirit, unto the father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners; but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ, himself, being the (ακρογωνιαιου—akrogōniaiou) corner-foundation, in whom the whole building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also (συνοικοδομεισθε—sunoikodomeisthe) are being builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

We will now try to put ourselves in the place of those to whom this remarkable passage was written. Let it be remembered that the words are those of the teacher whom our Lord selected to reveal to us His will in the Church. What his words meant for the Ephesians, they mean for us;

for we are under the same dispensation of the gospel. No different message has been sent. We wish to analyze these teachings, noting the place, force, and meaning of each word, so far as necessary.

I. *Two peoples are put in contrast*—a contrast as positive as between light and darkness. These are:

1. Israel, with its God-given advantages.
2. The Gentiles when in a state of heathenism.

These represented the whole world at that time. Israel was "the circumcision," and Gentiles were "the uncircumcision." The two had been utterly separated in all spiritual things, as the Apostle shows; but after the Gentiles received the gospel, the two became one in Christ Jesus, "one new man," Verses 13–15. Israelites were already in covenant with God, Verse 19; and when Gentiles accepted Christ they became "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,"—both having been reconciled to God in one body, Verses 16–19.

Our teacher makes another, an itemized statement of Israel's advantages in Romans ix, 4, 5: "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service (of God), and the promises: whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came." In Romans iii, 2, the Jews are said to have been in advantage "much every way; chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God." And what of all this, taken in connection with Ephesians ii, 11–22? Was God's Church in Israel? If so, we must remember our teacher's limitation, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." This means, as we think, that though the nation was very sinful, God had His true people in it. From the first, Paul teaches that there was a distinction made. He says: "Neither because they are of the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Our Lord gives a parallel teaching in John viii.

During, and after His earthly sojourn, a great and

increasing difference was seen between two classes of Israelites—some accepting and others rejecting Jesus as the Christ. In Acts vi, 7, we read: "The number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith." See also Acts xi, 21. Doubtless believers (of true kind) and unbelievers had always been in Israel; and we may conclude that there were always enough faithful ones to preserve the right to the titles "commonwealth of Israel," and "household of God." This must have been so, or Hebrews xi could not have been written. Thus it was that Israel stood in contrast with Gentiles.

II. "The commonwealth of Israel" must have known Christ by faith, and must have been His people; for they are put in contrast with Gentiles, as we have seen, before the latter became His people. "Once" the Ephesians had been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise." The word "once," applies to their time of heathenism, before the gospel was known among them. But when the gospel was carried to them and they had accepted it, their relation to the "commonwealth of Israel" was entirely changed. They were "no more strangers and foreigners;" but became Christ's people and thus "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God."

The fact that confronts us is this: As soon as Gentiles became members of the Church, through their acceptance of Christ, the contrast between them and Israel was destroyed. Then they "were made nigh, by the blood of Christ," to those who were called "nigh" in Verse 17. The latter could have been no others than Israel; for they were the only people on earth except those called "Gentiles." Evidently, the sense in which the word "commonwealth" is now used, was not the Bible-meaning of that term when Paul wrote this epistle, for the title was applied to Israel, as God's people, before the conversion of the Gentiles—during the period embraced by the word "once," which indicates

the time when those Gentiles were yet in heathenism. Paul clearly intended God's believing people whom we would now call "the Church," or there is no meaning in the positive contrast between Israel and the heathen Gentiles. When we connect this passage with the epitomized history of faith in Israel, as given in Hebrews xi, it is impossible to think that the teachings can apply to an organization of the Gentiles after the coming of Christ. By the witness of Hebrews xi, a great and continuously increasing multitude of saints lived and died "in the faith" long before Christ came; so that we are told, "the time would fail" to mention all of them, Verse 32. And that term, "in the faith," does it not teach that they were true believers in the expected Christ? "These all obtained a good report through faith," but to whom did their faith join their hopes and efforts, lives and deaths? Of some of them we read, "God was not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city;" and this because "they desired a better country (than earth) even an heavenly." Surely they were the redeemed of God; therefore, God's people. By comparing Ephesians ii, and Romans ix, where the same people are spoken of, we find that "the commonwealth of Israel"—the possessor of God's favor and promises, covenants and oracles—was in existence as far back as the time of the great events at Mt. Sinai; for to them pertained the giving of the law," and we know that the law was given at Mt. Sinai, in the beginning of the wilderness journey. Still further back our New Testament studies send us; for to Israel also pertained "the covenants of promise." Now the history shows nothing which can be so designated, excepting the covenants made with Abraham. But does this mean that the Church existed at that remote date? We have no answer at this stage of our search. Suffice it for the present, that our teacher has described "the commonwealth of Israel," in Ephesians ii, as the Church of God, "the saints," and "the household of God," built upon "the foundation-corner," Jesus Christ.

III. But what of those "covenants of promise"? Were they carnal, or spiritual? If it be said that they were carnal, then how about the contrast between Israel in possession of them, and Gentiles destitute of them while and *because* Christless, but coming into their benefits with Israel as soon as they accepted Christ? While "without Christ" Gentiles were "strangers from the covenants of promise," but "in Christ Jesus, no more strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." Could carnal promises and covenants make that difference? See! Being "in Christ" did away with the contrast! Does not that prove that those "covenants of promise" were spiritual and vitally connected with faith in Christ? If carnal, they applied to the Israelitish inheritance in Canaan, then being lost under Roman rule. But all know that Gentiles were not made "fellow-heirs" with Israel *in that inheritance, by accepting Christ*; yet they were made "fellow-heirs" *in those covenants* by accepting Christ. This fact meets us at every turn. What shall we do with it? If, *when they came into the Church of Christ*, Gentiles were made "fellow-heirs" with Israel, how can we avoid concluding that Israel was already of the Church of Christ? Two Greek words sustain this conclusion. Israelites were πολιται (politai), which means "citizens." In accepting Christ the Gentiles became συμπολιται (sumpolitai), "fellow-citizens." Israelites were already "citizens"; and Gentiles became "fellow-citizens" with Israel when they became Christians. Note the distinction: They were not made "*citizens*," but "*fellow*-citizens" by coming into the Church; made "fellow-citizens" in "the commonwealth of Israel." As positively as possible, this proves that no new Church was organized for Gentiles. When Christianized, they became "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God"; became "*fellow*-citizens," not "citizens," and "*of*," not "*the* (first) household of God." So, of necessity, we must believe that "the saints" and "the household of God" already existed in an organized form to receive those Gentiles.

Our teacher says in Ephesians iii, that he was chosen to reveal what had not been fully understood, namely: "That the Gentiles should be (not "heirs," but *συγκληρονομα* —sugklêronoma) co-heirs—fellow-partakers; and (not "a body," but *συσσωμα*—sussōma) a joint-body; and (not, "partakers," but, *συμμετοχα*—summetocha) joint-partakers of God's promises in Christ, by the gospel." This array of careful emphasis impresses us. Language could not be stronger to teach that Israel was of the Church of Christ; or that there was a spiritual Israel within the nation. It is further proved that the origin of the Church was not in the time of Christ, nor of His Apostles; and that no new Church was organized for Gentiles, but that they were received into the Church already existing.

At the risk of suffering criticism for repetition, we must review this study in another form; and to this we devote the next chapter. The matter seems of so great importance as to demand a thorough examination. The trying of almost every word cannot be superfluous in seeking truth in the Word of God. Our object is not to uphold accepted, but to find Scriptural, views. We wish the answer to our question as God gives it.

CHAPTER V.

ISRAEL AND GENTILES.

Guarding against error by review—Catechetical exercise on Ephesians ii, 11–22; iii, 1–6; Galatians iii, 7–29; Romans xv, 8–10—"The fathers"—Promises not fulfilled in Israel—Why Christ came—Church origin not in the New Testament—Study of Old Testament necessary—Jewish example.

AN open Bible should be at hand in reading this chapter. If we fall into any error, or fail to write the true report of the Holy Spirit's teachings, we desire the reader to see it with his own eyes. But with the same eyes we wish him to see if we do truly represent the Word of God. For re-examination the catechetical form is adopted as to some verses of passages already studied. See Ephesians ii, 11–22.

From whom and what were Gentiles "far off" before the Gospel was carried to them?

From Christ; hope; "the covenant of promise," etc. Verse 12.

With whom were they then in contrast?

The "commonwealth of Israel; saints; household of God," and the "heirs of God's promise in Christ." Verses 12–19; iii, 6.

How were Gentiles "made nigh"?

In Christ Jesus; by the blood of Christ. Verse 13.

What was done to make them "nigh"?

Christ broke down "the middle-wall of partition" which had kept them "afar off." Verse 14.

Where else is the term "afar off" applied to those to whom God's promise in Christ was sent?

Peter used it in the first New Dispensation sermon, Acts ii, 39. The Greek word used in both cases is *μακραν* (makran), far, remote, distant.

What are meant by "commonwealth of Israel" and "household of God"?

These terms must mean the Church of Christ in Israel; for when Gentiles accepted Christ and came into His Church, that made them joint heirs; a joint body; and fellow partakers with "the commonwealth of Israel," and "of the household of God." Verses 11–13, 19.

How do we know the Israelites were meant in those terms?

In Verse 11 two peoples are mentioned,—Gentiles, who were called "uncircumcision," while those so designating them were called "circumcision in the flesh, made by hands," which referred to Israel.

Is "household of God" elsewhere used to denote the Church?

We find its equivalent, as in Hebrews x, 21, "house of God," meaning the Church over which Christ rules; in 1 Corinthians iii, 9, "Ye are God's building"; in Galatians vi, 10, "The household of faith"; in 1 Timothy iii, 15, "The house of God"; and so in 1 Peter iv, 17.

Who were the "both," of Verse 14, who were made "one"?

Gentiles of Verse 11, who had (Verse 13) been made nigh by the blood of Christ; and Israel, Verse 12; for none others are mentioned.

What, if any, was the former relationship?

There was none. They had been separate, as "circumcision" and "uncircumcision," Verse 11; and as "nigh" and "afar off," Verse 17.

How had they been separated?

By what is called "the middle-wall of partition"; also by "the law of commandments in ordinances." Verses 14, 15.

What became of that wall and law?

Christ broke the wall down, Verse 14, and "abolished in His flesh the enmity—the law of commandments in ordinances." Verse 16.

What resulted from those acts?

"Both"—the Gentiles of Verse 11, and Israel of Verse 12—"were made one, reconciled to God in one body by the cross." Verse 15.

What was Christ's object in this?

"For to make, in himself, of (tous duo) the two, one new man, so making peace," Verse 15; and that through Him both might have "access, by one Spirit, unto the Father." Verse 18.

That being done, how did our Apostle greet the Gentiles?

"Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." Verse 19.

Does this teach of two households—one for Israel and the other for Gentiles?

No; only one household is mentioned.

What, then, became of the Gentiles when brought to Christ?

They were received into "the household of God," already existing, as "fellow-citizens with the saints," (Verse 19) and (iii, 6) as "fellow-heirs and of the same body, and (συμμετοχα—summetocha) joint partakers of God's promises in Christ, by the gospel."

How many foundations had this one "household" in its union?

One, only. This was composed of "Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ, himself, being the foundation-corner," upon which all the building rested, and "in whom all the building (συναρμολογουμενη—sunarmologoumenê) fitted together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Verses 20, 21.

How are we to regard this mention of "Apostles and Prophets" as parts of the foundation?

They were the workmen employed on "the building," the "ambassadors" of the Christ, who gathered together the building materials and fitted them upon the "foundation-corner" by preaching the gospel of the Christ. The doctrine of the Christ, which they proclaimed, is the foundation upon which the Church rests.

What of the words, "in whom ye also are builded together," or, literally—"are being built together"? Verse 22.

As addressed to Gentiles who had accepted Christ, the words told them that they were materials gathered and used together with the Israelitish materials, or church-members. In 1 Peter ii, 5, believers are called "living stones."

What of the words in Verse 21: "Groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord?"

As just shown, Israel and Gentiles became, in common, the building materials fitted together in the one building. So to speak, Israel was the material already on the ground and being used in the foundation-work. The Gentiles were the material newly brought from the "quarries." These two, being used together, made the growth of the spiritual house. Therefore the words "In whom (the Christ) all the building fitted together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Both were built together and grew up together in the one Christ.

But were all Israelites put into the foundation-work?

No. For Romans ix, 6: "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." As in all foundation-work, some stones are rejected as inferior, or worthless.

How were all the materials used, brought together?

"In Christ, by the gospel," Ephesians ii, 17; iii, 6. He became "the end of the law, for righteousness, to every one that believeth," Romans x, 4. In Romans i, 16, we read that His gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first; and also to the Greek." Therefore the gospel was sent, first to the Jews, Luke xxiv, 47; Acts ii; then to the Gentiles, or "all nations." See Matthew xxviii, 19, 20. The "enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances"—had shut out the Gentile material. Israel within Israel had worshiped the true God, and was the first material used. Gentiles had worshiped false gods, and had been as trees unfelled and stone unquarried. In Christ, by the gospel, Israel was called away from law-sacrifices which had only prophesied Christ's

atonement, but could never take away sins. See Hebrews x, 4–11. Gentiles were called away from idols and heathenism. Both were called by Christ, who preached peace to both; and through Him both were given "access by one Spirit unto the Father," Ephesians ii, 17, 18. Thus, "both," the two, were made "one" in the bonds of one faith uniting them to and in one Saviour; and so one "new man" was created in Christ Jesus.

We have seen who the "both" were. Who were the "twain"?

The "twain," or the two, the same as the "both."

What and who was the "new man"?

The believer in Christ Jesus, standing where no believer had ever before stood,—in the Church opened to all the world, and in which all, without respect of condition, nationality or person, were to be, and were one in Christ by faith and the baptism with the Holy Spirit—the one Spirit of Chapter ii, 18. See 1 Corinthians xii, 13; Galatians iii, 27, 28.

What is meant by the word "reconcile," in Verse 16?

The Greek word is *αποκαταλασσω* (apokatalassō), meaning "to transfer from a certain condition, or state to another quite different;" also "to restore to favor," as in Romans v, 11, where "atonement," should be "reconciliation."

What is meant by "the enmity," in Verses 15, 16?

The Greek word is *εχθρα* (echthra), meaning "discord, alienation."

What, then, of the words in Verse 16, "Reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross"?

As Gentiles were "aliens and strangers," spiritually (in contrast with Israel), when they accepted Christ and so became members of His Church, that was their reconciliation—their "transfer" from their former state of heathenism into a condition quite different, namely: the condition of knowing God; or (Galatians iv, 9) of being "known of God" as His covenanted people together with Israel. Then the contrast ceased to be; and "both" became "one body."

See also Romans xii, 5; 1 Corinthians xii, 12, 13, 27. Christ "abolished, in His flesh, the enmity"—the alienation from one another and from God—by giving himself, in the flesh, a sacrifice for the sins of the world. So He made "an end of the law for righteousness" in behalf of the "both" by His atonement for both. Thus did the "twain" become fellow-citizens in the spiritual "commonwealth" in which Israelites were already "citizens." Israel was "nigh," and Gentiles were "made nigh by the blood of Christ" preached to them as at first unto Israel. The atonement was actually made in Israel, and there it was first preached, together with the promises—afterwards fulfilled—to the Gentiles as those "afar off," Acts ii, 39; Hebrews ix, 6–15. Everything which had kept the "both" apart was taken away by what is represented in the words "the cross." The changes were so great that nothing short of the term "one new man," would suffice to express it. This was the "finishing touch" to our Lord's work in "the time of the reformation," Hebrews ix, 10. What must we conclude? As Israel was the "household of God," there was none other with which the Gentiles could have been builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit,"when they were made Christians. See Paul's doctrine in 1 Corinthians iii, 16; vi, 19; 2 Corinthians vi, 16. Over and over we present the fact that, besides the commonwealth of Israel, there was no organization into which believing Gentiles could have been gathered. If, then, the acceptance of Christ made them "fellow-citizens" in that organization, it must have been the Church of Christ! Let us review the main facts, as thus far found:

I. "The commonwealth of Israel" was certainly a spiritual organization, for when Gentiles who accepted Christ became Christians, they became members of it.

II. Gentiles were not formed into an independent and new spiritual commonwealth, but were received into "the commonwealth of Israel" already existing. And thus, also, of "the household of God."

III. Gentiles were called into "the commonwealth of Israel"; but no calls were made upon Israel to enter any Gentile organization.

If we can understand language at all, our studies compel acceptance of at least one thing as a fact, namely: *Israel received Gentiles into the Church.* We have not made this fact; but have simply recorded what was found on the pages of God's Word as all can read it for themselves.

That this was in the purpose of God, is declared in Galatians iii, 8, thus: "The Scripture (προϊδουσα—proïdousa) looking forward (to the fact) that God would justify the heathen through faith (προευηγγελισατο — proeuêggelisato) announced beforehand the joyful tidings unto Abraham." We cannot avoid seeing that this connects the reception of Gentiles in Paul's day, with God's dealings with Abraham many centuries before. Paul gives as the "text" of that "gospel preached unto Abraham," "In thee shall all nations be blessed." After this, Verses 13, 14, we find a remarkable teaching: "Christ hath redeemed us (Gentiles) from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us—that the blessing of Abraham might come on the (ethnê) nations through Christ Jesus." Again, Verse 16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Then Verse 29, (ei de) "But if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The words in Verse 16 ("He saith not, And to seeds, as of many") indicate (as it seems to us,) God's ordination of a special seed-line not running through all the descendants of Abraham in the flesh, but in connection with Christ. The teaching of the several verses seems to be, In "one," that is, in Christ, the seed-line was to be preserved and made to embrace Gentiles. That connection, through Christ, with Abraham is also taught in the first sermons of the New Dispensation. See Acts ii, 39; iii, 25, 26, and compare with Genesis xii, 3; xvii, 4–7.

But how were the "afar off" Gentiles so connected with Abraham as to be of the seed-line with Christ, and heirs of God's promise to Abraham? Whither are we being led by the teacher whom our Lord sent us? We search the Scriptures, and find this answer: In Genesis xvii, 9–19, 21; Romans ix, 7; Hebrews xi, 18, we read of Isaac, the heir in the covenant-line after his father Abraham. In Galatians iv, 28, Paul tells Gentiles: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of the promise." In Acts xiii, 32, 33, Paul speaks of the promise "made unto the fathers," as a promise about Jesus Christ. In Romans iii, 29, he says that God is the God of both Jews and Gentiles. In Romans ii, 25–29; iv, 13–17, he teaches that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision makes a difference; but the walking, or not walking "in the steps of our father Abraham—who is the father of us all (both Jews and Gentiles) before him whom he believed, even God." Thus we see, unless we are reading wrongly, how far back God's arrangements for giving the Gentiles a portion in the "household of faith" reached. Was the Prophet speaking of this in Isaiah xi, 10, when he said, "And in that day there shall be a root (the Christ) out of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign to the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek"?

Again, Isaiah xxvii, 6, "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Give this a carnal meaning, and its fulfillment was never seen; and there seems no prospect of it. Give it a spiritual meaning, as the Church of Christ developing out of Israel, and the fulfillment is before our eyes today. What is the meaning? Our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, in John iv, 22, "Salvation is of the Jews"—one of the titles of Israel. And so says our Apostle: "The covenants of promise pertained to Israel." We now place all that precedes, under the light of Romans xv, 8–10, quoting from the "new version":

"For this I say, that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might

confirm the promises given unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy, as it is written, Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people." (The Greek says, as before shown, "ethnê—nations," in each case.) We note:

I. Jesus Christ was "made (γεγενησθαι—gegenêsthai, has become; or, as some Greek reads, γενεσθαι—genesthai, became) a minister of the circumcision." He was born a Jew, and was circumcised on the eighth day, according to the law of Genesis xvii. See Luke ii, 21. He began and finished His ministry among the circumcised, Matthew xv, 24. He sent His gospel to the Gentiles only after His crucifixion; that is, after His personal mission was finished, Matthew xxviii, 18–20.

II. "For the truth of God;" in behalf of it; to uphold and put it forward to accomplishment.

III. "That he might confirm." The Greek word is βεβαιοω (bebaioō), meaning, "to confirm, establish, make steadfast, insure accomplishment of," etc.

IV. "The promises made to the fathers." (1). To Abraham, Genesis xii, 3; xvii, 4, 5; referred to in Galatians iii, 8, as "the gospel preached before unto Abraham." (2). To Isaac, Abraham's successor, Genesis xxi, 12; xxvi, 1–4. (3). To Jacob, Isaac's successor, Genesis xxviii, 1–14.

Only these three are called "the fathers," in connection with the promises for "all families" and "many nations" of the earth.

Jesus came to "confirm"—make good by fulfillment, those promises; to uphold, maintain "the truth of God" who gave them to "the fathers." That they were not carnal promises, is seen in the fact that Jesus did not confirm any carnal promises. On the contrary, He showed by word and deed that His mission was not for such ends. It was wholly spiritual. The very wording of those promises shows that they could not be fulfilled to carnal Israel, nor by the gospel preached only there. To fulfill them it was necessary that Christ should open the Church to all nations of earth, Matthew xxviii, 19. Therefore, the words, "Rejoice ye

(ethnê) nations with his people." But could the nations rejoice with His people, unless His people already had existence when the nations were called to this privilege?

Christ's promise-confirming mission brought Him to Israel, first, then it sent His gospel to "all nations" outside of Israel. In Roman xv, 27, it is written "If the (ethnê) nations have been made partakers of their (Israel's, Verse 26) spiritual things," etc. Do we not see that Israel must have had the "spiritual things" before others could become partakers with them? In the sentence, "Rejoice ye nations with his people," the words, "his people," could mean none other than Israel; for God had no other people when the gospel was sent to the nations; and if Israel did not constitute the people of God, then God had no people at all, anywhere on earth. Compare Roman ix, 25; Hosea ii, 23.

We, as is evident, have reached the point at which we must leave the New Testament, and seek the origin of the Church in the Old Testament. And, surely, none can object to an Old Testament study; for that is also a part of God's Word; though much of it is only historical. And is not much of the New Testament historical, also? Our Lord and His disciples recognized the Old Testament, and used it, as the Word of God. In preaching, they often quoted from it. This thought should establish and quicken our faith in, and reverence for that part of the Bible. Indeed we find that the New Testament is but explanatory of what was before written, and is its fulfillment also. But for that our Lord and His disciples would never have come to us; for their work was to fulfill what had been before written; or to establish such of the old doctrines as were to be permanent. When Jewish believers (Acts x, and xi) objected to receiving Gentiles, and condemned Peter for preaching to them, he answered: "What was I that I could withstand God?" Then the objectors "held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then hath God, also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." God has

not shown us the origin of the Visible Church in the New Testament. Is it not, therefore, His will that we go to the Old Testament? And if we find that He did give His Church unto Israel before opening it to the Gentiles, what are we that we should withstand God? Ought Gentiles to rebel, where Jews bowed before the will of God? Jews had to put aside their prejudices that they might preach to and receive Gentiles. What, if God calls Gentiles to put aside their prejudices that they may go to Jewish history for the origin of the Church? Go we must, if we are to have the answer to our question; for the New Testament does not give it.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OLD TESTAMENT STUDY.

No Hebrew word for "Church"—Various Hebrew words—The Septuagint—"Sanctuary," the scriptural word—The wilderness tabernacle—Synagogues and officers—Date of synagogues—Church existence indicated—Judah and Israel—No atheists—God's people not perfect—Exodus and Sinai—The decalogue not of civil laws—The Sabbath in Israel—Spiritual life under Egyptian bondage.

PARTS of this chapter may not interest some readers, but they are necessary for the truth. As in the Greek of the New Testament, so in the Hebrew of the Old, no word is found of which "Church" is the only meaning. An exercise among words belonging to our subject, shows this; and also proves, beyond doubt, that God had a people regularly organized for His worship and service. We say this after making a full examination. As we state the results, it may be that the reader will be wearied, but no more will be said than is deemed useful.

In the Greek of Hebrews ii, 12, we find "ekklêsia" as the translation of the Hebrew קָהָל (qähäl) in quoting Psalms xxii, 22. Our version of that Psalm reads: "In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee," but Hebrews ii, 12, is rendered, "In the midst of the church." So in the Septuagint, from which most of the New Testament quotations were made. Thus "ekklêsia" and "qähäl" were treated as synonymous by the Septuagint translators of the Hebrew. But both words were used in other meanings, therefore the rule for studying connections must be followed. The same is true of other Hebrew words, as will be seen.

In Genesis xxviii, 17, Jacob called Bethel, בֵּית אֱלֹהִים (bêth Elohim)—"house of God." Joshua ix, 23, applies the same term to the *people* of God. Other words, as

עֵדָה (êdah), "congregation" of Jehovah, סֹוד (sōd), אֹהֶל (ohel), מוֹעֵד (moêd), מִשְׁכָּן (mishkan), etc., denote worshipers, in some places; in others, the translations are, congregation, assembly, tent, tabernacle, etc. (We say just here, that wherever the word "LORD" is seen in the form [small capitals] here given, the translation should be "Jehovah," and will be so rendered in this book. See our Chapter VII.) In the Septuagint (a Jewish-Greek translation of the Old Testament, about B. C. 280-90) "qähäl" is translated by "sunagōgê" in Genesis xxviii, 3; Exodus xvi, 3; Leviticus iv, 21. But sometimes the translation is "ekklêsia," as in 1 Chronicles xxix, 20; Proverbs v, 14. In the latter place "êdah" is translated by "sunagōgê," as in most places. The word מִקְדָּשׁ (miqdash) has almost entire spiritual meaning as "sacred, hallowed, holy place, sanctuary," etc. It was used for some place or house specially set apart for God's service, and is found in nearly two hundred passages, e. g., Exodus xv, 17; xxv, 8; xxx, 13, 24; xxxvi, 1–6, and so on to Zephaniah iii, 4. Its testimony is that God had, far back in the centuries, an organized people who gathered in or at holy places—places reckoned holy—for His worship. The word "ohel," with "moêd," was used in a sacred sense for "the tent" or tabernacle of the congregation—the movable place of worship during the wilderness-journey. It was distinctly so termed as the holy place for meeting and communing with God. Later, the connection between the two words was broken, especially after the building of the temple at Jerusalem. The word "mishkan"—already noted—meaning "place of worship," is found in Ezra vii, 15; Psalms xxvi, 8; cxxxii, 7; Ezekiel xxxvii, 27. In Psalms lxxiv, 3, we read of the enemy doing "wickedly in the (קֹדֶשׁ qodesh) sanctuary"; and in Verse 4, "moêd" is used for Jehovah's "congregations." In Ezekiel xliv, 24, "moêd," in the plural, is used for God's worshipers who would keep His laws and hallow His

Sabbaths. Several of these words are the equivalent of "synagogue" of later date, as is generally supposed. (Of this we will speak presently). In Psalms lxxiv, 8, we read: "They have burnt up all the (moêdhe) synagogues of God." Turning back to Numbers x, 1–8, we find a clear distinction between "êdah"—the assembly of Verse 3, and "qähäl," the congregation of Verse 7. The "assembly" was to gather at the door of the tabernacle to meet their leader, Moses, when all the trumpets were blown, Verse 3. One trumpet summoned the civil rulers, Verse 4. The "alarm" blown was marching orders, Verses 5, 6. "But," said God, "when the (qähäl) congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow; but ye shall not sound an alarm. And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance forever throughout your generations," Verses 7, 8. Those priests were God's ministers, therefore here "qähäl" must mean the congregation of the Church.

In Numbers xv, 15, 16, is the law for the stranger who desired to worship with God's "qähäl." In Numbers xvi, 2, "êdah" is used for the people of the nation, while "moêd" is used for "the congregation." But in the next verse "êdah" is used for "the congregation"—called "holy"; and "qähäl—congregation of Jehovah." In Numbers xix, 20, "the (qähäl) congregation" is what we would certainly call "the Church." The unpurified man was to be cut off from this congregation because "he hath defiled the (miqdash) sanctuary of Jehovah." The wilfully unclean man was to be excommunicated from the "qähäl," not from the nation, for his offense was not civil, but religious—against "the sanctuary of Jehovah." In Deuteronomy xxiii, 1–3, the unclean man was not deprived of citizenship; for his descendants in the nation "to his tenth generation" are mentioned. Though this uncleanness was not voluntary (like the other), but from misfortune, it cut off the man and his descendants from "the (qähäl) congregation of Jehovah." See also Numbers xix, 13.

In 1 Kings viii; 14–65, "the (qähäl) congregations a worshiping assembly before Jehovah our God." So 1 Chronicles xxix, 20; 2 Chronicles vi and vii, are records of worshiping congregations. In 2 Chronicles xxix, 27–29, we see a worshiping assembly and they sang "the song of Jehovah." In Verse 30, we see that the Psalms were used, "the words of David and Asaph the Seer," in praise to Jehovah. Were not those genuine Church-services? The words of Psalms xxii, 22,—quoted as Christ's words in Hebrews ii 12,—surely belonged to the Church! He is quoted as saying: "In the midst of the ("qähäl" in Psalms xxii; "ekklêsia" in Hebrews ii) congregation (in Psalms xxii; "church" in Hebrew ii) will I sing praise unto thee." Can we think of Christ as singing "praise" to God in a secular audience, and calling those composing it, "brethren"? In Psalms xxvi; lxxxix; cvii; cxi, "qähäl, sōd, êdah, and moêd" are used to denote worshiping assemblies. Many more passages could be cited, but it cannot be necessary. Those noticed give abundant evidence that God's Church did exist, if an organized people worshiping God under His visible approval can be called a Church. We have examined about two hundred passages, in Hebrew and the Greek of the Septuagint—noting how the Hebrew was translated there; and so far as deemed necessary, the results have been given. Call those worshipers what we may, there they are in positive church-form. The one difficulty appears to be, that no Hebrew word was translated, "Church," as is the New Testament "ekklêsia."

In the later history of Israel, we find "synagogues." When these (as definitely such,) originated, the records do not show. But what were the places and congregations of worship in the early history of Israel? When the movable tabernacle of the wilderness was succeeded by the temple, we cannot think that the people scattered over the land had no local places of worship, though such places were not spoken of as synagogues. God had been exceedingly careful in providing for His worship and for all religious services,

from the very hour in which he delivered Israel out of the Egyptian bondage. See the arrangements for the tabernacle services in the wilderness. God dictated everything in relation to them, in a most careful and minute manner. Would He relax His demands after the people were settled in Canaan? Nay; one of the first steps taken, in allotting the people their portions in the land, was to distribute priests equally among the tribes so that none should be without religious leaders, Joshua xxi; 1 Chronicles vi, 54 Nehemiah vii, 73. The latter passage shows priests dwelling in all the cities. In Malachi ii, 7, the priest is called "The messenger of Jehovah of hosts." This was always his office in Israel. The distribution of these ministers throughout the tribes, has every appearance of providing for regular religious services throughout Israel. The frequent mention of "sanctuaries" indicates the existence of numerous places for Divine services. In Acts xv, 21, we read: "For Moses, of old, (literally, from generations ancient) hath them that preach him (i. e., what he taught) being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." How far back does that phrase, "of old," reach? In Acts xiii, 27, Paul spoke of "the voices of the prophets" as read every Sabbath day. Here, again, we ask: How far back does that reach? From the time of leaving Egypt, on down the centuries to the days of the Apostles, it is evident that religious teachers and services were as established customs in Israel. The expression, "voices of the prophets," must mean the preserved teachings which the prophets had given throughout the Old Dispensation. In Acts iii, 24, Peter said: "Yea, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold these days." Did the preaching of Christ extend as far back as the time of Samuel? So it would seem; for Christ was the subject of Peter's sermon. He was preaching about the "days" of Jesus as the Christ; and said that Samuel had foretold what he was preaching about. Such is the meaning of the words "these days,"

the days of Jesus as the Christ. This takes us a long way into the past of Israel's history. If we turn back in that history, to the time of Samuel, and trace down the ages, we find religious services held in all the generations, the messages of God preached to the people, the preachers sought by the people for religious instruction, special days and seasons of religious services strictly observed, and every other indication of church life, 1 Samuel x; xix; 2 Kings iv; Ezekiel xiv; xx, etc. The latter chapter shows the custom continued in the time of captivity, also. Necessarily, there must have been places of worship for the frequent and long-continued services. The worshipers were there from the birth of the nation, certainly; but their places of worship were not called—as later—"synagogues." Though we do not find the *name*, we do find the *thing*, the untitled Church; and places of worship.

In the time of our Lord, synagogues were governed by the (*αρχισυναγωγος*—archisunagōgos) president, or moderating elder, who conducted, or superintended the services. Some records show that there were often, if not always, several of these officers to one synagogue. Notwithstanding the differences in customs, if they and the assemblies over which they presided had been found in our New Dispensation—searching the Scriptures, as they did, to learn about the Christ—we would probably regard them as of the Church. Whether one body or many bodies, we cannot feel that they were less churchly because they existed so long ago among "the generations ancient." Sinners beyond Calvary must have needed God's salvation and spiritual care in the means of grace, as we do now. Accordingly, we see God recognizing and providing for such needs. In the time of Christ and His Apostles the Scriptures were expounded to the people, especially on the Sabbath days, by those regarded as competent for the service, Luke iv, 16–21; Acts xiii, 5, 15; xv, 21. Can we believe that such things began to be only then? We know, from history, how obstinately those Israelites clung

to the customs of their ancestors, and particularly "the customs of Moses," which term represented their "faith and manners" in religion. They were exceedingly slow to admit any changes in the ancient and revered religious ways which had descended to them from their fathers; and they were bitterly hostile towards innovations. From all this, we argue, that what is seen in the days of Jesus had been "from generations ancient"; and this conclusion is fully sustained by preceding findings of this chapter. Mere names of places of worship, or of the organizations, cannot be essential. The only question of importance is, Did a people exist in ancient times whose organization, character, and customs were such as to give them Church claims? Call the places of worship "synagogues," "sanctuaries,"—what does it matter? The existence of the places proves the worshipers, and the worshipers vouch for the places. Wherever the places of worship were, there the morning and evening sacrifice and services responded to the temple-service at Jerusalem. We do not consider the silence of early history as to the word "synagogue" of special moment. The precise form of the synagogue of the later days may or may not have been known previous to the captivity of the nation. All we need to know is that there were worshipers throughout the land, and during all the centuries, organized for God's service. Of this there can be no doubt after the foregoing studies. And a principal feature in the fact is that the organizations were under the special supervision of God, himself. Can we believe in a church-existence after seeing thus much?

After the nation was divided—say about B. C. 975—by the mad policy of Rehoboam, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin held to him; but the rest of Israel went to Jeroboam who, at once, began plans to separate those cleaving to him from all intercourse with the religious ordinances at Jerusalem. He was only too successful, for he heathenized his followers, 1 Kings xii; xiii. So Israel was lost to God's service!

About B. C. 730, God's threat, in 1 Kings xiv, 15—to "root up Israel out of the good land which he gave to their fathers," and "to scatter them beyond the river"—was executed. That Israel had become completely heathenized is seen in 2 Kings xvii. Therefore God "removed them out of His sight," Verses 18, 23. They were "carried away out of their own land to Assyria, and placed in Halah and in Habor, (by) the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." We can find no satisfactory account of their return. If they never returned they had no part in the crucifixion of our Lord. Great things were prophesied of them, which have had no fulfillment in the carnal sphere; nor can we see how they can be fulfilled there. We do not know what became of the greater part of "the ten tribes," and the matter is not of our present study. We are but glancing at the perils which beset that organization—so like the Church—in the land whither God brought the people. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin—cleaving to Rehoboam—remained in possession of Palestine as "The kingdom of Judah"; but the name, "Israel," was still applied to them with frequency. They maintained a sort of intermittent allegiance to God until about B. C. 599, when they were carried away to Babylon in captivity, and were kept there "until the reign of the kingdom of Persia," 2 Kings xxv; 2 Chronicles xxxvi.

There was a restoration about B. C. 536 (Ezra i) and "some of the children of Israel" returned, Ezra vii, 7. The two—Judah and Israel—were in possession of the land, as one nation, for about seven hundred years before the first captivity; and during that time they were a distinctly religious people. From the first, God's training of them was personal and strict. And we cannot think that they could have lived during so long time, in constant association with God, without filling their country with houses of worship. We have seen that the translators of the ancient Jewish Scriptures (who were Jews,) did mention synagogues in the Septuagint, in records reaching as far back as Genesis

xxviii, 3; Exodus xvi, 3; Leviticus iv, 21; and other passages show church existence. In Leviticus iv, we read of sin-offerings for the whole congregation; and all manner of expressions are scattered through the records in such form as to make a complete church history. One striking fact may be mentioned, just here, showing the necessarily religious character of the people; an avowed atheist, or infidel was not known among them. Until dissensions divided the nation—breaking the people away from direct intercourse with God—all were professed believers in and worshipers of God. It was a great education through all those years, when God's presence was visibly manifested in the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. It would seem that, under such circumstances, it was impossible not to exercise faith and not to be true to the worship of God. True, as already seen, the people often appear in most unworthy character, but we should remember that the Bible-history is true to actual life, and hides no man's sins. Not seldom do we reflect on this; and we feel assured that were God now to cause the lives of men—even in the Church—to be as truly recorded, there would be but little inclination left for criticisms of the ancient Israel. It is to be noticed that God's Book teaches of no perfect people. Among the faith heroes whom God thought worthy of special mention, are Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others whose lives were anything but blameless. Far away in the distance, and through the mist of years before the flood, Enoch is seen as a shadow flitting by—the one man who seems to have been spotless. His history is not really given. He seems as unreal as a dream that vanishes when we awake. What, if we knew all? But, supposing him pure; the blot of some sin is upon the life of every other of whom we read. What does that say to us? This: In all ages God has recognized as His own, people who needed atonement for their sins. It is His idea of His Church that it shall be composed of sinners needing His great salvation. To the end of the sacred records, the writers—not excepting

"the disciple whom Jesus loved"—agree upon the doctrine as it stands in one sentence: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John i, 8. The Holy Spirit is the heart-searcher, and he it was who held the hand which recorded that standing charge of self-deception against all who claim to be sinless. The Church would no longer have need of the Saviour "who ever liveth to make intercession for us," if it was composed of perfect beings. And the same truth holds as to individuals. The record in 1 John iii, 9, is not to the contrary; for the force of the Spirit's language (*ου δυναται δμαρτανειν*—ou dunatai hamartanein) is, "cannot wilfully sin continuously," that is, he who is born of God "cannot sin" *as the rule of life.* Being born of God, the life of God in the heart causes—not personal perfection, but—warfare with sin so that the child of God can have no settled peace with it. The Church never had members superior to John and Paul. John's testimony is given above. Paul's is in Romans vii and Philippians iii. In Verse 15, of the latter chapter, Paul was not speaking of personal perfection, but of the completion of the duties of Christian living. This is seen in the use of the word *τετελειωμαι* (teteleiōmai), in Verse 12, which is translated "perfect," but it means "to finish, or complete an operation or circuit, to carry anything to its end." That is what Paul said he was striving to do as to his Christian life. In Verse 15, the adjective is *τελειος*—teleios, and has many uses. To understand, we must note its connections here. What was Paul's subject? The duty of striving towards all that Jesus Christ would have His followers to be. He illustrates his own obedience in Verses 12–14. Then he teaches, Verse 15: "As many as are perfect (that is, in accomplishing Christian duty,) should be of this mind with me—the mind to strive on towards the prize," etc., more conformity to Christ.

But our work, here, is not to discuss doctrines of the inner Christian life. It is hoped that the reader will pardon digressions, for we confess error. Yet when some interesting

subject tempts, it is hard to let it alone entirely. Let us return to duty. Carefully and patiently we have traced through every chapter from Malachi to Exodus; and constantly we see positive evidences of church-existence, so that we are constrained to believe that the origin of the Church must be somewhere in the Old Testament records. Faith looking to Christ is seen all the way along; nor was it less an exercise of that saving grace because Christ was not then incarnate. "The fullness of time" (Galatians iv, 4) had not come. Yet so sure was it in the purpose of God, that its benefits were as perfect to those looking forward to Calvary as to those looking back to the accomplished atonement. It should suffice that God said to those pilgrims: "I will set my tabernacle among you; and my soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and ye shall be my people," Leviticus xxvi, 11, 12. See Exodus xxix, 45. Israel was always claimed of God in like terms.

Reaching the Book of Exodus, we come upon a great event in Israel's history,—the deliverance from Egyptian bondage. When the newly-freed host of liberated slaves reached Mt. Sinai, God halted them, reduced them to order and took direct charge of their government. Thus was born what is called "The Theocracy." As we understand, it was then that the *nation* was organized. The promises to Israel's ancestors were to be fulfilled, Genesis xii, 2; xlvi, 3. But God's first proposition—while containing the word "nation"—was of a religious, rather than civil character, Exodus xix, 6. Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests and an holy nation." This language is applied to the Church on earth and in heaven. God's people are called "a holy priesthood, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, and (*λαος εις περιποιησαν*—laos eis peripoiêsan) a people for a possession." See 1 Peter ii, 5, 9. Thus God called Israel! And when John saw the Church perfected in heaven, its history was being told in praise to him—as the redeemed sang—"who hath made us kings and priests unto God," Revelation 1, 6; xx, 6. Was the Church in Israel?

The covenant proposed at Mt. Sinai was to be kept in a life of obedience to God. So the people understood, for they said "All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do." The presence of priests shows that a religious organization already existed in Israel, and the manner in which they are spoken of, proves that they had held office and discharged its duties before the people came to Mt. Sinai. They are not presented as a new order. As priests and people stood before the Mount, God descended upon it in great glory and delivered the "Ten Commandments." This was, at first, done orally. Those commandments were not for civil government, but for duty to God, and they were never placed among the civil and ceremonial laws. (See our Chapter XIII.) Therefore Moses said, "God is come to prove you, that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not." Had that been God's first manifestation to Israel, it might be considered as the organization of the Church. But the foregoing history of Israel is full of God. His Sabbath-day was observed before the laws were given at Mt. Sinai, Exodus xvi. He said, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." In Nehemiah ix, 14, we read that God made known His holy Sabbath "by the hand of Moses." This may seem to teach that it was one of the Mosaic laws. But facts speak otherwise. The meaning is that Moses was God's historian, and recorded the institution of the Sabbath, as he did the work of creation. He afterwards ingrafted its duties among his laws. In Numbers ix, 1–5, is a command to keep the Passover; but no one thinks of that feast as an institution of Moses because its observance is commanded among his laws. Facts are to govern interpretation. See John vii, 22, where Jesus said: "Moses gave you circumcision." His explanation shows that the rite did not, however, originate with Moses; for God gave it long before to "the fathers." The origin of the Sabbath was at the close of God's creating work, Genesis ii, 1; and there he pointed as the reason for Israel's conformity to His law, Exodus xx, 8–11. (See our

Chapter XXXIX.) The records show that Israel belonged to God as His chosen people before their deliverance from Egypt, Exodus iii, etc. He said to Pharaoh: "Let my people go that they may serve me." Their bondage was so severe that they could give no proper service to God. It is not probable that they were allowed to keep the Sabbath, or to perform any religious duty, while in bondage. They were slaves to heathen oppressors who made their lives bitter in the servitude; and what cared Egypt for God or His service? Therefore God opened a way to this and other duties of religion. The deliverance was the removal of hindrances.

There are many indications of deep, strong spiritual life in the history of that people, even while in bondage. And this thought comes, as we study them: No one doubts that Peter and his associates were of God's faithful ones in the Church. But when their faithfulness answered the threats of their enemies, in the words "We ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts v, 29), did they stand on higher spiritual plane, or show more true fear of God and devotion to His service than did the midwives of the Hebrews in Egypt, of whom it is written when the bondage was most severe, "They feared God and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them"? Exodus i, 17. And this at the peril of their lives! What do our findings mean? The Theocracy is clearly revealed. There is no doubt as to its origin. But it was, clearly, not the Church. Back of it are earnest people worshiping God, and often serving with a courage and faithfulness not since surpassed. We reverence the martyrs who, on this side of Calvary, sealed their faithfulness to God with their blood. What ought we to think of those Israelites who could not be driven to deny their God either by fear of death, or sufferings and degradations worse than death? Were they worthy to be of the Church? The records of Hebrews xi, embrace them by going beyond them.

In the next chapter we wish to review the life of their great leader, Moses, who must have given character to the people so intimately associated with him.

CHAPTER VII.

MOSES.

The man of the mountains of God—In Egypt—Israel's leader—History traced—Mount of Transfiguration—Old and New disciples meet—The old more intelligent—Impress of Moses—His preaching—"Abram"—The words, "LORD," and "Lord"—"I AM."

THE man of the mountains of God! The title is suggested by the incidents in his history. He comes to us most prominently when we reach the time for Israel's deliverance from the bondage in Egypt. Since then he has stood before the world as one of its greatest men—equalled by few, if any; excelled by none! As a leader of God's faith-heroes he has honorable mention in the New Testament, Hebrews xi. Christ and his disciples spoke of him as one whose life was inseparably connected with the Church and the gospel. His birth and lineage were Hebrew, not Jewish; for there were none called "Jews" until many centuries afterwards. He lived because his people feared God, rather than the mightiest king of their day! The Pharaoh who reigned over Egypt during Israel's bondage, commanded that every son born in Israel should be killed, Exodus i, 22. Under the shadow of that decree Moses was born. Death waited to snatch away his first life-breath. His own people—those who were to minister in the hour of his birth—were under the command of the great king: "If he be a son then shall ye kill him," Exodus i, 16. How then did Moses live? The answer is in Exodus i, 17–22; ii, 1–10.

Providentially coming into the hands of the Pharaoh's daughter, and finding favor in her eyes, he was adopted as a child of the royal family. Thus he was reared, and became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and was mighty in words and deeds," Acts vii, 22. Doubtless

the gratification of every earthly ambition was within his reach. But his real greatness was to develop in the service of the Sovereign of the universe. As we trace his history until we walk in the midst of his triumphal train of the hosts departing from Egypt, laden with the spoil of their enemies and oppressors, (see note at end of our Chapter III) we wonder if a prophesy of later age, concerning the Church, did not take its key-note from the past: "As I live, saith Jehovah, thou shalt surely clothe thyself with them all (thy destroyers and them that laid thee waste) as with an ornament. And kings shall be thy nourishers, and (margin) princesses thy nursing mothers." God so ordered that the early years of the child should be under the care of his godly mother, Exodus ii, 9. We may well believe that the seed were then sown for the life-harvest of the man whose faith, as the leader of Israel, glorified God. It was the Spirit-guided hand of an Apostle of Christ which wrote the words telling of the connection of this man's life with the gospel now preached to us. And he was one of the first gospel preachers, in having prophesied of the Christ to come. Such was heaven's estimate of Moses that it bestowed upon him an honor given to none other of our race, and Jehovah took special account of his name, Exodus xxxiii, 17. He was but mortal, therefore suffered physical death. But God and holy angels were the ministers to his last moments, and the only attendants at his funeral. One of the grandest sights ever witnessed on earth was before the hosts of Israel when, at the command of Jehovah, their great leader resigned his charge and took his solitary way to depart from the places which once knew him that they might know him no more, forever! As the mountains, where God talked with him, towered above hills, so was this man greater than his fellows. From the "mountain of God, even Horeb," he walked in sublime faith and courage, where his equal never walked, until he came to Mt. Sinai which was "altogether on a smoke because Jehovah descended upon it"; and there God talked with

him "face to face as a man speaketh to his friend," Exodus xxxiii, 11. From Mt. Sinai he led the hosts of Israel with a perfect grandeur of patience, heroism, and faith—equalled only by his unselfishness and chivalrous sense of honor—to the inheritance of blessings which he knew he was not to share. For though so strong, he erred through human weakness in that he did not sanctify God in the eyes of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, Numbers xx, 12.

When the borders of the long-sought land were reached, his personal mission was done. Then he went from human sight because God called him "up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah which is over against Jericho. * * * * So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab according to the word of Jehovah. And He buried him in a valley of Moab over against Beth-peor," Deuteronomy xxxiv, 1–6. Then was a funeral procession such as earth never saw, and heaven has witnessed but once, as God and his holy angels attended the body of God's friend from "the top of Pisgah" down the mountain-side to that "valley of Moab"!

Earth's last sight of Moses (and that limited to three persons, besides Jesus,) was when he returned from the land of the ever-living (to which God must have raised him after burial, Jude 9) to stand once again, as of old, upon "a high mountain apart" and hold converse with God—then manifest in the flesh—reproach for whom he had so long ago counted "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt," and for whom—like Paul, in after time,—he had "suffered the loss of all things" of earth. Far away in the past, having shaped his earthly life by the faith of the Christ, it seems good that he should have been permitted to cross the interval of the centuries to greet "the Hope of Israel"—the Christ who had come "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers"; good, too, that he was allowed to come in such honor, to "the promised land"

at last! There, once more, "God talked with him face to face as a man speaketh with his friend." They talked of the atoning death which Jesus was to suffer at Jerusalem. See Mark ix, 4; Luke ix, 30, 31.

If Moses was not of the Church of Christ, why was he called from the spirit-world to commune with "The Lamb of God" in His progress to the cross? There he stood—a disciple of the Old Dispensation—in the presence of the three peculiarly-honored disciples of the New Dispensation, yet nearer our Lord and in more intimate association with Him than they: There the Old and the New disciples met as brethren of one faith, before the one Lord, seeing eye to eye and together, beholding Him in His glory as, for a brief space, His transfiguration raised Him above the humiliation to which He had come. They "beheld his glory, as of the only-begotten of the Father." See John i, 14. With Moses came another disciple of the Old Dispensation whom—also beyond Jordan—God had signally honored, 2 Kings ii. And we marvel that "Moses and Elias" understood the mission of Jesus better than did Peter and James and John! The Old saints talked with Jesus of "his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem"; the New—Peter being spokesman—talked of making "tabernacles" for Jesus and his visitors! Who may shut out Moses and Elias from church-fellowship when they are seen to have been more intelligently appreciative of our Lord's mission than were the three leading disciples of the New Dispensation-Church? After that meeting, Moses was seen no more by earthly eyes; but his impress is still upon the earth and in the Church. Through him God gave that great ceremonial system of training and service which educated Israel away from heathen superstitions, and bound the people together not only as a nation but as an atonement-needing people whose sacrificial altars preached Christ until "the fullness of time," as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." When Christ came He was preached as "Him of whom Moses in

the law did write," John i, 45. In condemning Jewish unbelievers, Jesus said: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me". John v, 46. Moses said to Israel, in Deuteronomy xviii, 15–19: "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken"; and in one of the first sermons of the New Dispensation it was declared that those words were a part of the preaching about Christ, Acts iii, 22–24. See also Acts xxvi, 22; xxviii, 23.

By all this it is seen that Moses stood upon the same plane, for Christ, as did the preachers of the New Dispensation. And among those wondrous word-pictures of the Revelation, we see the redeemed in the Church Triumphant "having harps in their hands; and they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Thus, from first to last, in Time and in Eternity, this man is closely associated with "the man, Christ Jesus," in all pertaining to the Church.

But in God's dealings with Moses we are drawn to the study of another great man—Abraham—who has been prominent on preceding pages, in our examination of Paul's teachings. He comes before us now for special study, as follows: When God spoke to Moses from "the burning bush" and commissioned him to be Israel's deliverer, certain words were spoken which impress us: "I am the God of thy fathers; the God of Abraham; the God of Isaac; and the God of Jacob." In the message to Israel God called Himself "The Jehovah God of your fathers; the God of Abraham; the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." So also in the message to the "elders" of Israel, Verse 16. It does not yet appear why those three men were mentioned thus, and it is natural to ask: Why did God bring them into the history of Israel in so marked a manner, after they had been so long dead? Why mention them so particularly, as if they were the only ancestors that Israel ever had? Joseph was much nearer,

in time; and there had been other great men in the ancestral line. Yet God took no note of any of them; and called Himself the God of none except Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Nothing in the immediate connection explains this. Surely there must be matters of importance in the history of those men, especially in that of Abraham; for of the three he is given the most prominence, not only in being first mentioned in this passage, but he is more spoken of in other parts of the Bible, and very noticeably it is so in the New Testament. For such reasons it is judged best to devote the next chapter to the study of this man.

We end the present chapter with some remarks on the word יְהוָה (Jehovah), as it has unusual mention in the interview between God and Moses, at the "bush." We read: "And God said, moreover, unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Jehovah God of your fathers, the God of Abraham; the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you. This is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations." In a preceding chapter attention was called to the common translation of the word "LORD"; and we said that wherever it appears in "small capitals," as here, it should be translated "Jehovah." So it is in the Hebrew, though the Septuagint translators substituted the weaker word "Adonai," in their Greek. Now, in Exodus iii, 15, God said that "Jehovah" is the name which is His "memorial to all generations." Therefore we conclude that He wished that title to be preserved and used "to all generations." It is the name by which we—Gentiles—should know Him; for we are of the "all generations." Paul teaches, in Romans iii, 29, that He is as truly our God as the God of the Jews. We saw in preceding chapters how He became the God of Gentiles, through Christ. So as He is our Jehovah, and if the Jews cast His great title off, all the more reason why we should contend for it. It is the special name of *the God of the Church!* Let us substitute it, for "LORD," in Bible-reading!

But in Exodus iii, 14, is another title deserving attention: "I am that I am." God said: "Say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." The Hebrew is: אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה (eh-yeh asher eh-yeh). The verb comes from הָיָה (ha-ya), "to be, to become," etc. As Jehovah styled Himself the God of "the fathers" who first received the promises; and as He here declared His intention of fulfilling those promises; and further, as the tense of the verb justifies us, we regard this title as not only declaring the eternal Being of Jehovah, but as also indicating His intention to "*become*" unto Israel what He had promised "the fathers"—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thus the revelation would be: "I AM," that is, *The Fulfiller* "*hath sent me.*" In Exodus vi, 3, God said that He was not known to "the fathers" by His name, "Jehovah"; but that he appeared to them as "Almighty God." Such was His attitude in giving the promises of Genesis xv, xvii, which were repeated to Isaac and Jacob. None but a "God Almighty" could fulfill such promises; therefore He gave them in that name and character, and was known as "The Promiser" to "the fathers." In fact, they knew God's name—Jehovah—but its *significance* was not revealed to them; and it is to be noticed that Abraham nearly always addressed him as "God," or as "Adonai"—Lord.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABRAM.

The man of The Book of God—Not a Jew—Jacob and Israelites—Abram's separation, Genesis xii to xv—Interview in Genesis xv—Canaan covenant—New things in Genesis xvii—First recorded demand for spiritual service—Note on tithes.

THE man of The Book of God. While other names have frequent mention in the Bible, the name of this man stands there in peculiar preëminence. He was a man of two names. Under the first—"Abram"—he is introduced to us in Genesis xi, 27–31, where some records of his family are found. Though known as the ancestor of the people called "Jews," he was not a Jew, and that title is never applied to him. He was a Chaldean. "Ur of the Chaldees" was his native place. There he grew to manhood, and married, Genesis xi. He was called "The Hebrew." Of the meaning of that word we are not sure. In the Septuagint it is translated by περατη (peratê), which has the sense of: 1. An opposite land, etc. 2. That which may be crossed, or passed over, etc. In going from lower Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan, Abram had to cross the river Euphrates in order to reach Haran; then recross it in order to enter Canaan. So he was one who "crossed over from an opposite land." Some think his name was derived thus. "Hebrews" was the proper title of his descendants. So they are called in the Book of Genesis, in Exodus, and in 1 Samuel. In the New Testament, Paul calls himself "a Hebrew of the Hebrews." "Abram," means "exalted father," probably from the Hebrew אַב (ab), father; and רָאַם (räam) or, רוּם (rüm), "lifted up, high," etc. The Scriptural significance of the name is seen in Genesis xii; xv; xvii.

After God gave Abram's grandson—Jacob—the title "Israel," Genesis xxxii, his descendants were called "Israelites"; but that was long after Abram's day. Several times, the direct "strain" of Abram and Sarah was crossed so that Hebrew lineage did not remain pure—as in the cases of Judah (the son of Jacob) and the Canaanitess, Shuah, Genesis xxxviii, 2; and Joseph and his Egyptian wife, Asenath from whom came Ephraim and Manasseh—representative Israelites, Genesis xli, 45. See also the case of Moses. Exodus ii, 21, 22.

The word "Jew" appears centuries after Abram's death, in 2 Kings xvi, 6, near the time of Israel's captivity. It is thought to be a corruption of the name of the chief tribe, "Judah." These facts should be remembered in the study of the Bible. When the term "Jew" had come into general use, the people were not only captives to heathen conquerors, but were sunk to a very low spiritual condition.

The records show that God separated Abram from all the people of his time, for great and world-wide purposes. The immediate cause of his removal from his native land, Chaldea—is explained in Genesis xii, 1: "Now Jehovah had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will show thee." In the next verses God's purposes are stated: "And I will make of thee a great nation; and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Here are wonderful words for Jehovah to speak to any mere man. What can they mean? In studying them we see that there are:

I. Two purposes. (1) To make Abram the ancestor of a great nation. (2) In some way, to give "all families of the earth a blessing through him."

II. Two promises. (1) One limited to Abram and a single nation to descend from him. (2) The other embracing "all families of the earth."

In order to carry out these purposes, and fulfill these promises, Abram was separated from his native land and kindred, and father's house, and sent out to be a sojourner in a strange, heathen country.

God "had called" him! The results are shown in Genesis xii, and succeeding chapters, evidently, the call came before he left Ur of the Chaldees. See Genesis xii, 1; xv, 7; Acts vii, 2–4. It was the direct cause of his departure from Ur. In Genesis xi, 31, 32, we see that several members of his "father's house" began the journey with him, including his father, Terah, who died at Haran. That long journey and the dwelling at Haran, consumed much time. From the date of leaving Ur, and the departure from Haran, must have been several years. Can we approximate the time? Isaac was born twenty-five years after Abram left Haran, aged seventy-five years,—that is, when Abram was one hundred years old. But he must have had the covenant-call about thirty years before Isaac's birth, for that is the difference between the four hundred and thirty years from the covenant to the law, Galatians iii, 17; and the four hundred years of Genesis xv, 13, during which Abram's seed were to be afflicted by strangers and, also, be in special bondage to some one nation. He had no legal seed until the birth of Isaac. We reckon his age at seventy years when the covenant-call removed him from Ur, and that five more years elapsed before he left Haran. If this reckoning is correct, from that call to the law there were four hundred and thirty years; and from Isaac's birth to the law, there were four hundred years. (See our Chapter XXXI.) In Genesis xii, we read of Abram's arrival in the land of Canaan. There, Verse 7, God appeared to him saying: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." In that verse is the first *recorded* act of worship by Abram. "There builded he an altar to Jehovah, who appeared to him." In Verse 10, we read of his going down into Egypt to sojourn there because of the famine in Canaan, and the closing verses of that chapter narrate what occurred to him there.

Chapter xiii gives an account of his departure from Egypt, and of the separation from Lot, who had come with him to Canaan though he was not included in God's call. After Abram and Lot had agreed as to their habitations, Jehovah again appeared to Abram renewing his promise to give him the land of Canaan. Examination of these several interviews shows that, thus far, God talked with Abram only of the Canaan inheritance. No reference is made to the promise in Genesis xii, 3: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." How are we to regard this omission? It seems strange; for the interests involved, as all can see, were far greater than those embraced in the promise for one nation and Canaan. We must watch for explanations.

Chapter xiv describes the noted interview with Melchisedec, king of Salem, after Abram's brave feat in war. The "tithes" given by Abram to Melchisedec were according to the custom of the times. It was not an act of duty to God, and has no religious connections. (See note at end of Chapter.)

Chapter xv deals particularly with the promise for Canaan. Here we are halted by finding matter for careful study and thought. We note:

I. Once more God appeared to Abram, giving new assurances of favor, Verse 1.

II. Abram complained that he had no legal heir, Verses 2, 3.

III. A legal heir was promised; and Abram's faith accepted God's promise, Verses 4–6.

IV. God repeated the Canaan-promise, and Abram asked to be assured of its fulfillment, Verses 7, 8. We cannot fail to observe that, while accepting the promise for a legal heir, Abram manifested some doubt about the promise for the land of Canaan. Was this because its fulfillment was beyond any human power? It is plain that only God could fulfill it. The one man, Abram, was helpless against the nations in possession of that land. Therefore

his question: "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it," Verse 8.

V. God—intending to satisfy him—told him to arrange certain beasts and birds as if for offering a sacrifice. That was in keeping with the custom of the day in making covenants, or contracts. Having obeyed, Abram awaited further orders, Verses 9–11.

VI. "And when the sun was gone down, a deep sleep fell on Abram," and God said: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation (singular number, in contrast with plural just used) whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance. * * * But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again. * * * And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces," Verses 12–17. In Verse 18, is the explanation: "In that same day Jehovah (כָּרַת kärath) cut a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land."

Thus ended that strange interview. We have studied every part of it very carefully. In doing so, we saw that the Hebrew word "kärath" is not explained in the common version by the word "made," therefore we give the literal meaning—"cut"—as above. In Jeremiah xxxiv, 18, 19, we see God complaining of those who transgressed His covenant made "when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof." So was the old-time covenant-making. The persons making a covenant, cut an animal in two; placed the parts opposite to each other; then passed between them, uttering the words of the covenant. So the covenant was sealed. Thus, when God made that covenant with Abram, He—in the symbols of "the smoking furnace and burning lamp"—"passed between those parts" of the divided animals which Abram had arranged; and as He did so He spoke the words of His

covenant, "Unto thy seed have I given this land." Then the contract was regarded as finally closed and sealed. The covenant was "cut"; and so God had bound himself to fulfill it.

It is clear that this covenant embraced the land of Canaan, only. There is not even a remote reference to the promise of Genesis xii, 3 for "all families of the earth." Therefore that promise cannot come into our study here; for this covenant is closed, leaving it out.

In Chapter xvi are Ishmael's birth, and events connected with it.

Chapter xvii—as we look it over—proves to be of such character that it must be reserved for a separate study.

Before closing this chapter, one or two things should be noticed: In Genesis xv, 13, 14, we see that Abram's descendants were not to be a free and unmolested people for many years. First, the Canaanites were to afflict them, Verse 13. In this verse the plural number is used: "They shall serve *them*." As, before their servitude in Egypt, Israel was never in bondage to any nation, or company of nations—in the common meaning of the word "bondage," the reference is necessarily to the oppressions inflicted, from time to time, by Canaanites. But in Verse 14, the singular number is used—"and *that nation* whom they shall serve, will I judge." This undoubtedly refers to the Egyptian, or actual bondage. In our Chapter XXXI, the significance of this distinction will be seen.

We now offer some remarks preparatory to the study of Genesis xvii. It is a chapter of new things. It was a new thing when God changed the name a man had borne for a whole century, excepting one year. He changed Abram's name to "Abraham." The reasons are given; and as God thought that change important enough to be made, we should think it important enough for our remembrance and respect. We must accept what God did. There is as much difference in God's dealings with this man after that change of name, as if he were altogether another man concerned in other affairs.

The close of Chapter xvi left Abram aged eighty-six years. In Chapter xvii, we find him—as Abraham—aged ninety-nine years, and in new relations under his new name.

Another new thing, is the record of God's command for personal, spiritual service. The words are: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect." Until this chapter, God had talked of carnal things, only, in His dealings with this man. Here he takes a new and opposite course—assumes control of "Abraham's life and conduct." No such demands are found in any previous record, but many such occur after this one. No doubt people had served God in obedience to His requirements made known in some way; but we find no recorded command until we come to this verse. Did that mean that a new state of things was to be inaugurated in God's dealings with man? Abraham's life had been, so to speak, full of God ever since that covenant-call was received. God had undertaken to provide for the temporal welfare of him and his descendants. But now He comes to him for the first time, so far as the records speak, with a special demand for spiritual service. We see Abel lying dead beside his altar, near the closed gates of Eden; Enoch walking his solitary way with God, until his translation; Noah and his family saved in the ark, because God could say to him, "Thee have I found righteous before me in this generation." And when the door of the ark was opened, after the flood, we see Noah coming forth to worship at the only altar in all the earth! But we find no commands for the service in any instance. The covenants preceding that of Genesis xvii—so far as the records show—were for temporal blessings. A spiritual covenant is generally supposed in Adam's case, but if there was one, it is not on clear record. Therefore we say, when the demand in Genesis xvii, 1, was made, its record appeared as a new thing in the Bible. A promise is added which seems to be conditioned upon faithfulness in the spiritual service demanded. God said: "Walk before me and be thou perfect; and I will make my covenant

between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." What does this mean? Why did God come into the individual life of this man in such a way? Some new thing must be coming to light. And why did God say, in this place, "*I will make my covenant* between me and thee"? Had He not already made His covenant in Chapter xv? Yet there may be a difference. In Chapter xv, the covenant was made with "Abram," or with this man under that name; but in Chapter xvii, God is talking with the man under the name "Abraham." In Chapter xv, the words are: "In that same day Jehovah made (cut) a covenant with Abram"; and all the responsibility is left upon God. Abram had nothing to do but wait for God to perform His promises. But in Chapter xvii, the words are: "I will make my covenant *between me and thee*,"—making "Abraham" a party to that covenant, and he is commanded to consecrate himself to God in holy living. There, then, is the difference; and it prophesies important things for the next study.

NOTE ON TITHES.

Examination of the Scriptures proves that God has put no requirement for tithes upon His Church. The tithes given by "Abram" and his grandson—Jacob—were not commanded as religious duty, nor does it appear that they were given in response to any command of God. They were given voluntarily; and we find no other record of such acts; see Genesis xiv, 20; xxviii, 22. The tithes long afterward commanded in Israel were a part of the gifts required under the Mosaic law, and when that was made void by the Gospel, the requirement for tithes was also made void. Under Mosaism the tithes were for the support of the separated Levites, and that of the worshipers coming to the great gatherings commanded in "The Law." When the New Dispensation opened, that state of things passed away and the tithe-law with it. The tithes of the third year were for the consumption of Levites, strangers, widows, and orphans, Deuteronomy xii, 6-18; xiv, 22-29; xxvi, 12. This was a private reserve kept at home—"within thy gates"—to be given "unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled." The Levites were to make "a heave-offering before Jehovah" from a tenth of their tithes. The tithe-law applied to the country produce—not to the cities—for the purposes stated. It was for the times and circumstances, only.

CHAPTER IX.

ABRAHAM.

New name and covenant—Reasons for change of name—Covenant-words. Differences in covenants—Meaning of Genesis xvii, 7, 8—קוּם (Qum). Bearing of Genesis xvii, 7, 8, on Chapter xv—God's delay in explaining covenant of Chapter xvii—Paul on "Circumcision"—Why given? A society organized—It is connected with the Church.

THE new name under which "The man of The Book of God" received the covenant of Genesis xvii, as shown in the preceding chapter. We have seen:

I. One covenant with "Abram," for carnal inheritance, closed and sealed by sacrifice when he was eighty-six years old, Genesis xv.

II. One covenant with "Abraham," under command for personal spiritual service, when he was aged ninety-nine, Genesis xvii.

We have a question for study here, namely: Were there two covenants, made at different times and in different names, or is the covenant of Genesis xvii only an elaboration of that of Genesis xv?

In Verse 4 is God's reason for the change of "Abram's" name. It is: "Thou shalt be a father of many nations." The name "Abraham" seems to be an abbreviation of two other words אַבְרָם (Abram), and הָמוֹן (hämōn). The latter word means: 1. Noise, sound. 2. Multitude, crowd, etc. The last letter of "Abram" (m) is dropped, and the first syllable of "hämōn" (ham) is added to the "Abra," making Abraham. This would be easily suggested by the meaning of the new name, "father of a multitude."

In making the covenant of Genesis xvii, God used a word (נָתַן näthan) different from that used in making the covenant of Genesis xv, which was "kärath." The word "näthan" is translated "*make*" in Verses 2, 6;

"*made*" in Verse 5; "*established*" in Verse 7. It does not belong to such transactions as that of Genesis xv. It means: (1.) To give, in any way. (2.) To put; set; lay; place. (3.) To make, in the sense of constitute one into being, thus or so. Examination of this chapter proves that the third—"(3.)"—sense is the meaning here. The idea is that of "appointing or constituting," etc.

In Genesis xii, 2, God said to Abram: "I (עָשָׂה äsä) will make of thee a great nation." Now this word, translated "make," means to work, labor, do, form, construct, build, etc. See its evident meaning in that promise to Abram. From his body—by natural generation—the "great nation" was to descend. That was God's purpose, therefore He used the word "äsä," which contains, as just seen, that very idea. A "great nation" was to be "formed, constructed, or builded" out of *Abram*. Such was the promise; and it was to be fulfilled by using the flesh of Abram—causing his body to produce the great nation; that is, he was to be its natural ancestor. But in Genesis xvii, is an emphatic difference. The word used there (näthan) says that *Abraham* was "constituted, or appointed," to be (by the will or choice of God,) "a father of many nations." That is, by Divine appointment he was to be made to *stand as* the father of many nations. The words of Genesis xii, 2; xv, 4, tell what God promised to make *of*, or *out of*, the body of "Abram," by laws of nature.

The teaching of Genesis xvii, 4, 5, is: God appointed "Abraham" to be the father of the multitude of nations. It was God's sovereign act! Now let us (1) look at the words of the covenant-making: Genesis xv, "kärath," to cut; Genesis xvii, "näthan," to constitute, or appoint. (2) see the attending circumstances in the two covenant-makings: In Genesis xv, a slaying of animals; an arranging of the parts, etc. In Genesis xvii, nothing of the kind, or even thining such things.

So then we see that those covenants differ in three particulars: (A) In the words used. (B) In the meaning

of the two fatherhoods—one of "Abram," and the other of "Abraham." (C) In purposes.

Hitherto God had talked only of Canaan and the one great nation of *Abram's* descendants to inhabit it. But to *Abraham* he speaks of "many nations," or, as in xviii, "all nations of the earth." And so, for the first time in the twenty-four years of dealing with this man, God turns His practical attention to the promise of Genesis xii, 3, for "all families of the earth." That expression—"all families of the earth"—we regard as synonymous with the words "all nations," "many nations," etc., for the same blessing, through the same source, was to be for each. Certainly, "the all families" make up the "many nations." See both promises in Genesis xviii. Had this covenant been the same with that of Genesis xv why should the man's name have been changed in making it? and why all the other differences? and why make two covenants for one thing?

The reason given (as we said) in xvii, 5, for changing Abram's name to "Abraham," is: "For (or because) a father of many nations (näthan) have I appointed thee." See also Verse 6. In Romans iv, 17, where Paul quotes this passage, he uses the Greek word τιθημι (tithêmi), which is proof that we have given the right meaning to "näthan." Now the Greek for "causing to become, to create," etc., is γινομαι (ginomai)—a later form of γιγνομαι (gignomai)—and this answers to the word of carnal promise (äsä) in Genesis xii, 2. But "tithêmi"—the word which Paul used in quoting Genesis xvii, 5—means "to place, set, constitute," as does "näthan," in Genesis xvii. Thus the right translation of Paul's quotation is: "I (τεθεικα—tetheika) have constituted thee a father of many nations." And in that connection he uses the remarkable words, "Abraham, who is the father of us all before Him whom he believed, even God." What is this but an explanation of Abraham's relation to us, given by the teacher whom our Lord sent us? Whom did the Apostle include in the words "us all"? Certainly all who are of the Church of Christ—all believers,

as he teaches in that chapter—whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

That God attached the greatest importance to the position He was giving to Abraham, is seen in the fact that He spoke of it three times in as many successive verses, Genesis xvii, 4, 5, 6.

All that is seen, thus far, impresses us as the introduction of a new plan which needed to be most carefully set forth—the more important parts of which were guarded by the emphasis of repetition. It is plain that something was intended in Genesis xii, 3, and xvii, different from and superior to what was said in xii, 2, and xv. That God had a twofold purpose, or two purposes in His dealings with Abraham is seen in the words of Genesis xviii, 18: "Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation; and all nations of the earth shall be blessed in him." We now state, in contrast, the points seen in these covenant-makings:

I. In Genesis xvii, God demands personal spiritual service of Abram, before changing his name. But there was no such demand in Genesis xv, nor anything looking to such obligations.

II. In Genesis xvii, in the covenant for "many nations," Abraham was to perform certain duties, one of which was (Verse 9) to keep that covenant in his own generation; and another to transmit it, for like keeping, to generations following. But no such duties were prescribed for Abram in Genesis xv, nor for his seed after him.

III. In Genesis xvii Abraham and seed were to render an active obedience. They had a covenant to "keep," Verse 9. But in Genesis xv Abram and seed were to be passive recipients. They were not told to keep any covenant; and could only wait upon what God would do in working out His promises; then receive the benefits.

IV. Genesis xvii agrees with Genesis xii, 3, in its universal promise; but Chapter xv, agrees with Chapter xii, 2, in its limited promises.

V. Genesis xvii, "Abraham"—father of a multitude—in covenant for "many (xviii, 18, "all") nations" and "all families of the earth," but not through any blood connection. But Genesis xv, "Abram"—exalted father—in covenant for one nation, only; and strictly by blood relationship as stated in Verses 4, 5.

VI. In Genesis xvii Abraham was (näthan) appointed to be the "father of many nations" so that he is (Romans iv, 17) "the father of us all before God." But Genesis xv, Abram was the "germ"—in his own body—from which the one nation was to spring up and grow.

VII. In Genesis xvii the covenant has a "token" (Verse 11), or seal called, "circumcision," to be borne by Abraham and his seed. But in Genesis xv there is no token of any kind prescribed nor even referred to.

These contrasts are sharp and positive, as all can see in the records. But how is it that in Genesis xvii, 7, 8, we have a mention of the Canaan covenant? Does it mean that this is only the covenant of Genesis xv enlarged? The words are (A. V.): "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." Our critical examination of these words results as follows:

These verses (7, 8) will be more easily understood, as to their presence in this chapter, by simply shutting them up in brackets, and regarding them as parenthetical. Our reason for saying this is in the fact that the word "establish" is a misleading translation. The Hebrew word is קוּם (qum). Did the reader ever study its Bible-use? If not, he has not thoroughly understood this chapter. The word means: 1. To rise up, stand 2. To set one's self, stand; (a) To stand firm, to be established, hence, to endure. (b) To remain. (c) To be confirmed, established, etc. Now it is

plain enough for the dullest mind to see, that there is a sort of kinship and oneness in all these meanings. They all center upon one idea, namely: A causing to stand, a confirming. Therefore we sum them up in one: To establish, in the sense of confirming, or causing to stand, or remain intact.

The word is not ordinarily, if at all, used for the first making of covenants, and does not apply to such acts. In examining passages where "kärath" (see Genesis xv, 18) is found—and we have examined all the books following Genesis—we discover that the word is generally applied, as are some others, to the first making of covenants. But the word "qum," while often translated by "establish," really means *to confirm what was said or done before*, thus causing it to remain as it was, stand, be confirmed. It *reaches back*, in all ordinary use—to something before done or promised, and gives assurance that it shall stand, or be made good. Doubt as to the correctness of this assertion is suggested by only one or two passages, but it disappears under examination. For example, in Genesis vi, 18, God said to Noah: "And (qum) I will establish my covenant." So is the translation. This seems, at sight, to mean a first covenant-making, but in Verses 8–16 we find that the covenant had already been made. It was included in Noah's reasons for building the ark, for God had covenanted to save him in it; and Verse 18 assures him that the promise would be fulfilled. In Genesis ix, 9, 11, 17 "qum" reaches back to the covenant of viii, 20–22. The general use of the word is as we have indicated, when applied to covenants, oaths, promises, etc. In Esther ix, 14–32, is another example. The king had issued his decree, covenanting to protect the Jews. Afterwards, Esther and Mordecai—having received authority—"wrote letters to (qum) confirm" what the king had promised. In Deuteronomy xix, 15 we read: "At the mouth of witnesses" shall the matter (qum) be established," that is, confirmed as true. In Genesis xxiii, 17–20, after a contract had been made between Abraham and Ephron,

for the purchase of the field and cave, all (qum) was made sure, or confirmed. In Leviticus xxv, 30, if a man did not redeem his home within a year, "it (qum) shall be established forever unto him that bought it." The sale and purchase were confirmed. In Isaiah viii, 10, the premeditated counsel of God's enemies "shall not (qum) stand," or be confirmed. Jeremiah xliv, 28, they "shall know whose words (qum) shall stand." Ezekiel xiii, 6, lying diviners "made others hope that they would (qum) confirm the word."

The Bible has illustrations too numerous to mention. If anyone wishes to test the matter further, he can, as we did, find half a hundred more passages of the kind cited. Our search was very tedious, as may be seen; for few, if any, passages were overlooked. We wanted the truth, and believe it is found. We are in no doubt as to the meaning of the word in Genesis xvii, 7. Our conclusion is, that it applies there

I. As assurance to Abraham that, notwithstanding the new covenant-making, the covenant of Genesis xv, should remain intact, and be fulfilled in all its terms. The covenant of Genesis xvii, was not to change nor, in any manner, interfere with that of Genesis xv.

II. In Verses 19–21, as assurance to Abraham that the covenant of circumcision would hold good for his successor—Isaac—and that its promises would remain for all the generations counted as "seed."

We believe that this study will successfully stand examination. To us it brought new light as to the covenant of Genesis xvii. We now see that the one nation had interests in this covenant only as the "many nations" were to have, and have, and that it is utterly distinct and separate from the covenant of Genesis xv.

We understand God as if He said to Abraham: "Though I make this new covenant, I do not mean to interfere with that of Genesis xv—made about fourteen years ago—but I will confirm to you and to your descendants

all the terms of that covenant for Canaan." And what more natural than that Abraham should wish this assurance! We put ourselves in his place, and try to realize the workings of his mind. How do we think? Thus: "The Canaan covenant has been standing about fourteen years, and now God comes to me, saying: I am going to make a covenant with you. He uses different words and terms; makes new demands; gives different promises. What does He intend? Is the first covenant to be set aside by this new one? Is this additional, or complemental to the other? Are my descendants—the great nation—to be swallowed up in the multitude of nations?" Questions and wonderings would assuredly come after such fashion; and God who knows every thought of a man before it is spoken, answered all in the use of that one little word "qum"!

We note further that God did not say what, or what kind of covenant He would make in Genesis xvii, until after the explanations in Verses 7, 8. Then, only, did He say, Verse 10, "This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised," * * * * "and (Verse 11) it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you," * * * "and (Verse 13) my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." The terms of this covenant embrace not only Abraham and seed of that age and country, but extend to all the nations and families of the earth in all after ages. This is expressly declared. Here then, is a very great covenant! It needs close study. Of one thing we are sure, namely: Whatever circumcision was, before God brought it into His service, is no concern of ours. The one question is: What did He want with it here? The records say that He called it into His service as a "token of the covenant" of this chapter. As already seen, Paul taught in Romans iv, that in this covenant Abraham was made "the father of us all before God;" and (Verse 13) he calls Abraham "the heir of the world." The covenant of Genesis xv made him the heir

of Canaan and the ancestor of one nation. But in Genesis xvii, he is made heir of the world and the father of all its nations though they may have no drop of his blood in their veins. Surely here is something, hitherto unknown to the Scriptures!

We reserve the study of circumcision for our next chapter, but Paul's explanation of it may be mentioned at this point. In Romans iv, 11, he says of Abraham: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had being uncircumcised." But why did God give it to him? Our Christ-sent teacher says: "That he might be the father of all them that believe." The expression is an unlimited one—"*all* them that believe." Then it means that Abraham is the father of every believer, no matter who he is, where he dwells, or what his nation. And another thing: This relationship to Abraham is not limited to those circumcised, for Romans iv, 11 says: "the father of all them that believe, *though they be not circumcised.*" Beyond doubt, his circumcision was God's recognition of his faith, but it is just as evident that in that recognition, God put him at the head of all families and nations of the earth. Was he the head of any organization, embracing all these? That the faith-connection is essential for seedship, is taught clearly in Romans iv, 16, 17, thus: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end (or so that) the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law (or Israel); but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all before Him whom he believed, even God; (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations.)" Therefore one may be of Abraham's seed without receiving circumcision; for the only condition is that we be "of the faith of Abraham."

But the "token"—circumcision—was commanded for Abraham's household, also. Now, some of the members are not spoken of as having faith, while others—the infants of eight days—could not exercise faith. What is this to

mean? Circumcision was God's recognition of Abraham's faith; but it could not be a recognition of faith in those infants. Therefore the recognition of faith could not have been the only intent in giving circumcision. Why, then, was it given? The answer may be in Genesis xvii, 14. There we are told that the uncircumcised infant—after the giving of the rite—should "be cut off from his people" as a covenant-breaker. What then? Was the infant, in Abraham's household, a member of a covenanted society? We are obliged to understand it so; for how could God regard and treat him as a covenant-breaker if he was not within the covenant? No one can break a covenant of which he is not a member, and in which he has no rights. Is it not so? Yet here is this man-child, only eight days old, whom God is going to treat as a covenant-breaker, if he is not circumcised! The inevitable and undeniable conclusion is, that the infant was a member of that covenant made on the basis of faith in the adult—Abraham—and embracing all his household. We see no way of escape—either in the case of the student of these records, or for the infant, since God put him within the covenant without waiting for the age when he could choose for himself. If God so arranged—and do not the records show that He did?—it was right, whether His dim-visioned creatures can, or cannot understand.

One thing is clear; Abraham and household were organized into some kind of a society, his faith fitting him as the basis upon which to organize. Having the records before us, we are bound to say that he—as the head of that household—was made to stand in his faith as the representative before God, of those composing his household; and that thus his infant seed were to be recognized and be circumcised as members of that covenant. That the society was organized for permanent existence is seen in the command—xvii, 9—that its covenant should be kept by the future generations of Abraham's seed in the line of Isaac, xvii, 18–21; xxi, 12. It must, also, have been of spiritual character

as Abraham's initiation was preceded by the requirement that he should "walk" and be "perfect" before God; also because Paul says the "token" was "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had." But what was the significance of the reception of the token by those who had not that "righteousness of the faith"? Our rule of study forbids speculations. God said, Verse 10, "This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised;" and, Verses 11–13, "ye shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you," * * * "and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." So then, the covenant was in the flesh through the "token." As, Verse 12, the child of eight days was also to have the token, the covenant was as much in his flesh as in the flesh of the believing adult. This shows that faith was not the pre-requisite for all the members of the covenant. The truth, therefore is this: As that society was organized on the basis of faith in the head of the household, all the household—as specified—became members by virtue of connection with the believing head. They were so recognized of God, and by him commanded to receive the token of membership. This is about as far as we can see now. We have only to say: That was God's society, and He had the right to make the organization and terms of membership as He pleased.

We feel sure, however, that we are getting among things of vital interest as to the Church. And we are the more certain of this because our teacher said to our Gentile brethren: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise," Galatians iii, 29. Words cannot more plainly declare that Abraham and the society composed of his seed, have connection with the Church of Christ. If these conclusions are correct, further studies will confirm them; if wrong, that will be ascertained in the same manner.

Finally: In God's words, Verse 13—"my covenant shall be in your flesh,"—we understand that circumcision under God's command, was the visible and sensible sign of being in covenant with God, and that its reception was recognition of God's claims, and a confession of obligation to be His according to the command, in Verse 1: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." The absence of the token, among those whom God claimed as His people, was equivalent to denial of the obligation, therefore a most serious matter. The father would act as one who ignored God, if he did not obey God's covenant-law for his child, and so too, he would do his child a great wrong.

CHAPTER X.

ABRAHAM AND CIRCUMCISION.

New to the Bible, and to God's dealing with man—Guiding rules—Modern Jewish Rabbis on circumcision—Comments—Circumcision traced in the Bible—Always spiritual—Old and New Testament voices—Circumcision and baptism mentioned—Circumcision of Ishmael—God a Sovereign in all.

CIRCUMCISION (מוּלָה müläh) was not a new thing in the world, when God gave it to Abraham as "a token of the covenant," Genesis xvii; but it was new to the Bible. It is said to have been practiced among Eastern nations as a sanitary measure. With that we have nothing to do here. It is our only duty to ascertain in what significance God adopted it, and commanded its use by those whose history we are studying in the Scriptures. As with the change of Abraham's name, so with this rite; its adoption was a new thing in God's dealings with men. So far as the records speak, that in Genesis xvii introduces the first sign of any kind which God ever required anyone to wear in His service; or which was ever used in covenant-making between God and man. We announce the following propositions as our law of study here:

I. If God adopts any sign or custom—no matter whence it comes, or what its former use or meaning—His definite adoption of it makes it His own; and in His service it is, henceforth, to be used according to His will and purpose as revealed in His Word, and apart from all former uses and associations.

II. If, after introducing any sign or custom into His service, God continues its former use or meaning, that is to be accepted as His will. But if He separates the rite or thing adopted from its former use, meaning, or association, and brings it into His service, whether by word or deed, in

new use, meaning, or association, it is to be thus accepted as His will. It is man's duty to accept from God all which He dictates for His own service, and just as He dictates it, without regard to any opinions, ways, or recommendations of others.

We now endeavor to continue our studies so that "Thus saith the Lord," may appear in the results. But before proceeding farther we present, only as a matter of interest, replies to inquiries which we made of able and prominent Jewish Rabbis, concerning the present Jewish doctrine as to circumcision, and as to past history of it.

One wrote: "The wide prevalence of circumcision, among Eastern nations, goes to show that it was a sanitary measure, that is, in human use. It was made to stand in the service of religion. Mosaism spiritualized the existing rite of circumcision, and reformed it from a physical expedient or superstitious rite, into a symbol of holiness and of alliance between God and man. The figure of speech, 'circumcise your hearts,'—shows that the writer attached more importance to purity of heart than to the bodily ceremony of circumcision. We regard Abraham as the propagator of the belief in one purely spiritual God."

We must take exception to the words "Mosaism spiritualized the existing rite of circumcision." The Bible, the very part accepted by Jews, declares that God gave the rite to Abraham, with a demand for spiritual service, long before Mosaism had an existence; and Paul says it was received by him as "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had." Doubtless, Jews would reject Paul as a renegade; but their own Moses linked spirituality and circumcision together—not as a union effected by himself, but—as so given of God. All that Mosaism did was to accept the rite as God first gave it.

That Abraham was "the propagator of the belief in one purely spiritual God" is correct. Until God formed that circumcision-society in His household, each Dispensation—from Adam to Abraham—ended in almost universal

heathenism. This is a fact which any reader of the Bible can verify, with ease. But after the formation of that society, the worshipers of God steadily multiplied in the earth. Does not this indicate that God formed that society for just such ends? It is assuredly the working of cause and effect.

Rabbi Calisch, the accomplished minister of the Congregation Beth Ahaba, Richmond, Virginia, writes as follows: "The Jews (and I speak of them as a body,—giving the opinion of the vast majority) regard the commandment of the circumcision as the establishment of a visible token of the covenant between God and Abraham, in the selection of the patriarch and his seed after him as the champions of a pure monotheism. The rite is regarded as the '*oth b'rith*,' the sign of the covenant; given first to Abraham (xvii, 9–12, and reaffirmed, Leviticus xii, 3), as the plain gold ring on a woman's finger is the token of wifehood and the right to motherhood. It is one of those commandments which the Israelites performed in times of dire religious persecutions, even in imminent danger of life. It is regarded by the vast majority of Jews of today, yet, as the test of *religious fellowship*, as I presume baptism is regarded by some Christian creeds; though it is not regarded as a *sine qua non* of admission to the Synagogue, or of salvation; as Judaism has always taught that the righteous man, even of the heathen, has a share in the world to come. * * * The rite, while originally a commandment, has been made by custom and tradition stronger than the law. Many Jews who habitually violate almost all Mosaic injunctions except the decalogue, neglect the festivities, the Sabbath, and even the most sacred of holy days, do not neglect to circumcise their children. To the preponderating majority, it is still the token of the Divine selection, the outward symbol of God's everlasting covenant and irrefragible promise."

By comparison, it will be seen that the findings of our studies are very much along this line; nor did we inquire

of this rabbi, nor of anyone else, until after we had completed our own examination of the Word of God as to teachings about this rite. We have given his opinion only as a matter of interest, as we said above; yet it is pleasant to have this confirmation of the correctness of our conclusions, especially from so able a representative of Jewish theology. It is also seen that the rabbi—stating general Jewish doctrine—gives circumcision an entirely spiritual significance. Indeed, after frequent inquiries of intelligent Jews, we have never met one who held any other views as to the rite.

But let us now search the Scriptures. Our law is there only. We begin with Genesis xvii, where the rite first appears in God's Word, as given to Abraham. Next, in Genesis xxxiv, 13, Jacob's sons use it "deceitfully," yet professedly to form (what the rabbi calls) "a religious fellowship" with Shechem. Their conduct was full of falsehood; and we only see that they used an ordinance of God to secure the success of revengeful purposes. Professedly they wished the Shechemites to join the people of God, according to the law: "When a stranger (that is, one not an Israelite) shall sojourn with thee—let all his males be circumcised." The origin of that law is in the covenant of Genesis xvii. Exodus iv, 25: The son of Moses was circumcised. Deuteronomy x, 16: Here Moses shows that he regarded the rite as spiritual, in the words, "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiff-necked." The outward rite signified the fact, or the need of a change of heart—so, a change in life. Joshua v: Circumcision renewed after unavoidable omission during the wilderness-journey. God said that thus the reproach of Egypt was removed from the people, Verse 9. All ties between heathen Egypt and Israel were obliterated by that new consecration to God. They were now indeed a free people who had reached their own "promised land" wherein they were to serve the God of "the fathers." Jeremiah iv, 4: The prophet's idea of spiritual consecration,

"Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah." Jeremiah ix, 25, 26: Israel's outward circumcision could not save from the ruin which would fall upon those who were "uncircumcised in heart."

The words "circumcised" and "uncircumcised" are of frequent occurrence. They stand as opposites, denoting conscious or other unfitness or wrongness in God's sight; also used to indicate God's professed people, or His and their enemies; sometimes used for the covenanted and the uncovenanted. The word, in its several forms—as noun, adjective, verb, etc.—is used so often in the New Testament that we will not undertake to quote from all the passages. Those desiring to do so, can find every mention of the rite by using a concordance. Our finding is that in the New as in the Old Testament the rite has a spiritual significance only. This appears most frequently and positively in the New Testament. Not once, in any record of God's Word, is the rite ever spoken of as having a carnal or merely national significance. We notice the following passages in the New Testament: Luke i, 59; ii, 21: The circumcision of John the Baptist, and of "the child Jesus," both on the legal eighth day of life, according to Genesis xvii. Acts vii, 51: Stephen called his persecutors "uncircumcised in heart and ears," because, as he charged, they always resisted the Holy Spirit. Does not that connect circumcision with the work of the Holy Spirit? Acts xv, 1–5: Jews insisted that Gentiles who had accepted Christ should be circumcised or not be saved. To this they added the keeping of the "law of Moses." Though in error as to the rite being essential, it is too clear to admit of any doubt that those Jews regarded circumcision as wholly of spiritual significance, just as the Church now regards baptism. Those Gentiles were being received into the Church of Christ. It was under such circumstances that believing Jews, who (Verses 4, 5) also were of the Church, insisted upon their circumcision. This proves, beyond any doubt, that the Jews considered the rite to be of spiritual character only.

Those Gentiles at Antioch, where the discussion began, were not being naturalized as Jews, nor were they seeking a part in the Canaan inheritance, but, as all the parties well knew, they were being received into the Church of Christ. Yet the Jews said: "It was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Romans ii, 25–29: Paul taught that the true circumcision, symbolized in the outward rite, was "of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." The teaching is, that the outward rite was of no benefit unless truly symbolizing the work of God's Spirit in the heart. Did Paul know? Romans iv: Explanatory of Abraham's circumcision, and of the relation to him of all who "walk in the steps of his faith."

In all these passages we have the God-given explanations of the covenant of circumcision received, first, by Abraham in Genesis xvii; and so are all carnal interpretations shut out. In Romans iv, 17, the God who inspired these records is declared to be "God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were." It was His Sovereign ordaining will and pleasure, without taking counsel of human will or preference. So Paul meant in that verse. God, of His own will, did what the Apostle there taught: made Abraham "the father of us all," before Himself, in that covenant of circumcision. He had the right so to order the affairs of His own Church. But are we without warrant in supposing that the connection is with the Church? We are guided by the address of this epistle to those "beloved of God, saints," and of other epistles, as Galatians i, 2: "Unto the churches of Galatia;" for in those two epistles especially our Apostle teaches of the part which Gentiles of the Church of Christ have in God's covenant with Abraham. Yet what are we to do about those of that society formed in the household of Abraham, who could not exercise faith—the infants of eight days? Are we to accept that society as the visible Church? Was the organization of the Church there? If

we say it was, are such as were members then, to be recognized as members now? Even though we have, as yet, no answer to such questions, there is reason for them.

We must not omit the record of Paul's circumcision, in Philippians iii. He speaks of receiving the rite as if he put great value upon the reception of it, yet, as we have seen, he it was who so emphatically taught its worthlessness if it did not represent the inward spiritual grace. And in that record, proof is once more given that the rite had no relation to the Canaan inheritance. Paul mentions it only in connection with his spiritual life.

We will now try the study, in this chapter, by a comparison of teachings in the Old and New Testaments.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ABRAHAM.

OLD TESTAMENT STATEMENTS.	NEW TESTAMENT RESPONSES.
Genesis xvii, 2–6. "Behold my covenant with thee!* And thou shalt be a father of many nations; for a father of many nations (נָתַן nāthan) have I appointed thee."	Romans iv, 16, 17. "To the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all before him whom he believed, even God. (As it is written, A father of many nations (τιθημι—tithēmi) have I appointed thee.)"
Genesis xii, 3; xxii, 18. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."	Acts iii, 25. "Ye are the children * * * of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham: in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."
Genesis xvii, 9. "Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations."	Galatians iii, 29. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Compare Verses 7–17.

*So reads the Hebrew.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ABRAHAM—CON.

OLD TESTAMENT STATEMENTS.	NEW TESTAMENT RESPONSES.
Genesis xvii, 10, 11. "This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and thee and thy seed after thee; every man-child that is among you shall be circumcised. * * * It shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you."	Romans iv, 11. "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, * * * that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised."
Genesis xvii, 21. "My covenant (קוּם qum) will I confirm with Isaac."	Galatians iv, 28. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of the promise."
Genesis xv, 6. "And he believed in Jehovah, and it was imputed to him for righteousness."	Romans iv, 23, 24. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."
Genesis xvii, 13. "And my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant."	Galatians iii, 17. "And this I say, That the covenant which was confirmed before, of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect."

Must we not say that God has established a vital connection between Abraham and the Church of Christ? That the Church is not now composed of believers in Israel, is no reason for objection, for in Galatians iii, 28, our teacher says: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." And in Romans iv, 17: "Abraham is the father of us all before God." Again, in Romans x, 12: "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call

upon Him;" and in Galatians v, 6: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision (of the Jew) nor uncircumcision (of the Gentile), availeth anything; but faith which worketh by love;" and in Colossians iii, 11: "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all;" and in Ephesians iv, 4: "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling" * * * "for (1 Corinthians xii, 13) by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

But, how can it all be? The Word answers: The connecting link between us and Abraham is Jesus Christ, who, according to the flesh, was "the son of Abraham," Matthew i, 1. In him is the binding together of the seed; for it is written, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; * * * that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promises of the Spirit through faith. * * * And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. * * * Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. * * * So then, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." All these words were written for us Gentiles, by our Christ-sent teacher. His third chapter to the Galatians is overflowing with such teachings. Did he understand that whereof he wrote? We cannot conceive why he, whom our Lord chose to reveal that "mystery" (Ephesians iii, 1–6) about the hope of the Gentiles, should have spoken as he did if we are not bound up in that "covenant of circumcision" with Abraham, "the father of us all before God." Christ's people compose the Church. If we are Christ's, we are not only of His Church,

but we are also "Abraham's seed;" and if Abraham's seed, then we are of that covenant which was made with him for his seed in all generations. For the covenant was not made for his children of the flesh but of the Spirit. So Paul teaches. Did he know? We return to notices of circumcision:

Colossians ii, 11–13. A parallel between a baptism and a circumcision—both, evidently, spiritual. The *tense* of the verb in this passage was overlooked by our translators. The reading should be, "Ye *were* circumcised with the circumcision of Christ," and (*συνταφεντες αυτώ εν τώ βαπτισματι* — suntaphentes autō en tō baptismati) having been buried with Him in *the* baptism." He was circumcised on the eighth day, according to the law of the covenant, thus shaping in His flesh the link to connect the Jewish and Gentile seed of Abraham—the father of both, before God; and it was the *circumcised Jesus* who gave baptism to the Gentile seed.

"The baptism" is not in the outward rite as "the circumcision" was not. The outward rites merely *bear the names* of the spiritual realities, of which the Apostle was writing. That he was speaking only of the latter, is clear; for, as the chapter shows (and also Romans vi), this circumcision or this baptism changes the spiritual condition and standing of the sinner receiving either. The result is stated in Verse 13: "You being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh hath he (God) quickened together with him (Christ), having forgiven you all trespasses," (See our Chapter XXVIII for the study of this baptism.)

Thus far we have in the Old Testament, one Lord, one Faith, one Circumcision. In the New Testament we have confirmation of the witnessing of the Old Testament to the spirituality of circumcision, and clear light thrown on the whole subject. But why was Ishmael circumcised if the rite was only spiritual and for the Isaac-line of the seed? So were all Jews circumcised.

As we understand, from our teacher, Paul, though all the Jews adopted circumcision, it was nought unless recognized of God. Moreover, *a national circumcision would be the result of obedience on the part of parents, to God's covenant-law for infants.* As to the circumcision of Ishmael and others of Abraham's household who were not retained in the seed-line, that was an act belonging to the organization of the society before Abraham had a legal heir in Isaac, through his legal wife, Sarah. They were used, temporarily, for the organization; and are we to deny God the right so to use them? If any cavil, the answer due them is in Romans ix, 20. There may be place for Peter's reply to his critics: "What was I, that I could withstand God?"

CHAPTER XI.

REVIEW OF COVENANTS.

Reasons for repetition—Catechetical on Genesis xvii and xv—Two covenants contrasted—Conclusions reached—What have we found?—Facts discovered—What, if not the Visible Church?—Difference before and after Genesis xvii.

WISHING to be sure that we have fallen into no error, preceding studies are here reviewed. Truth cannot be too well ascertained. There is much in Genesis xv and xvii, that must not be passed over hastily. The chapters should be carefully studied; for it is not a light matter to answer the question which seems now to hinge very much upon what is contained in them. It is hoped that the reader will realize the need of a thorough examination, so as not to grow impatient about this "plodding." With an open Bible let the following exercises be studied; Subject: Genesis xvii.

What covenant is contained in this Chapter?

That which made "Abram," "Abraham;" and in which he was appointed to be "a father of many nations."

What was there peculiar in that covenant?

I. It is the first covenant of God on record in which man was required to render personal spiritual service, and to strive for holy living before God.

II. It is the first transaction in which God changed a man's name in order to covenant-making, or for any other reason.

III. It is the first covenant in which God prescribed a membership token.

IV. Its "token" was a new thing to the Bible, and in God's dealings.

V. It is the first recorded covenant in which God commanded the reception of infants as members.

VI. Though made with one man, "all families of the earth" were, in some way, embraced by it.

What was God's idea of the significance of the "token"?

Every mention of circumcision in the Bible shows that God gave it as a spiritual rite to symbolize either the need, or the fact of a right heart before Him.

What was the witness of the "token" to Abraham?

In Romans iv, 11, Paul says that it was to him "A seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had."

For what other reason was it given to him?

In Romans iv, 11–17, Paul says: "That he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised * * * and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham (which he had) being uncircumcised." Thus he was made "the father of us all."

In what terms did God state that covenant?

Verses 10–12: "This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. * * * And he that is eight days old, shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed."

Why circumcise the infant who could not exercise faith?

Because God commanded it as a recognition of His covenant standing.

What of the words "among you," and "which is not of thy seed"?

1. "Among you" must refer to all in Abraham's household at the time, and to all in the households of his seed in after generations, Verse 9. 2. "Which is not of thy seed" must mean "the stranger," or the children of the stranger. In Leviticus xxv, 39–46, we see that Israelites were permitted to buy servants of the heathen for slaves; but Exodus xxi, etc., they could buy a brother Israelite for a limited

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time only. But (Verse 6) the servant could remain voluntarily.

How far did the command, to circumcise, apply as to time?

It extended to all future generations of the seed, or, until God should otherwise arrange.

Was the command absolute for all persons afterwards?

Under certain conditions: 1. For all the "seed" of Abraham. 2. For all servants. 3. For all strangers who would eat the Passover, after its institution, Exodus xii. But as the latter law was expressly made, it would seem that circumcision was not compulsory upon all within the bounds of Israel.

Was the command obligatory upon the "seed"?

Yes; by express words of God; and a penalty was prescribed for omission, Verse 14.

What was that penalty?

The uncircumcised man-child was to be cut off from his people.

Why the penalty?

God was going to train a people for His service, and omission of duty was disobedience which, if perpetuated, would destroy the form, or the very existence of the society He had organized for that purpose. Also, the example of disobedience would teach others to hold God in contempt. In Romans ii, 24, Paul said to the Jew (Verse 17): "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you."

What was the necessary effect of this covenant?

A permanent society was organized, the members of which and their seed, were bound to the service of God.

Were all the natural seed of Abraham in this covenant?

No. 1. Only Isaac, and the seed in his line, Verse 19; xxi, 12; Romans ix, 7; Hebrews xi, 18. 2. God rejected Ishmael, who was the son of "Abram"; not of covenanted "Abraham."

Why, then, was Ishmael circumcised?

Because God commanded all in the, then existing, household of Abraham to be initiated into the society He was forming. Abraham, alone, could not have constituted a society. Why God did not wait for the birth of Isaac, Jacob and others, we cannot say.

Would circumcision make all, afterwards receiving it, members in the covenant?

No. For, 1. In God's service, it was to continue in a specified line of the seed—in Isaac. 2. In order that the rite might be "a token of the covenant" it had to be applied, (*a*) In obedience to God; for He designated the seed-line and the members; (*b*) In conformity to the design of God in ordaining it; (*c*) The reception of the token meant consecration, as belonging to God.

Could any except males be parties in this covenant?

Yes. For God recognized "Sarai"—the wife of "Abram"—though prescribing no token for females. He changed her name from "Sarai" (lady, princess) to "Sarah" (mother of multitudes) that she might stand as the wife of "Abraham" in his covenant-appointment as "a father of many nations." See Verses 15, 16.

This covenant-making was remarkable in every respect and is unlike any other in the Bible.

We now give a brief examination to Genesis xv.

With whom was the covenant in Genesis xv made?

With "Abram" before his name was changed.

How long was this before the change of name?

About fourteen years. About one year later, Abram was eighty-six years old, (xvi, 16), and he was ninety-nine years old when the covenant of Chapter xvii, was made, for entering into which, his name was changed.

What are the promises of this covenant of Chapter xv?

Abram was assured that he should be ancestor of a great nation, and that they should possess the land of Canaan.

What "token" was given to this covenant?

There was none, nor any reference to such a thing.

What command was given to Abram—as to himself and others—for keeping this covenant?

None at all.

But, was no one to keep it?

Yes. God was to do so, and only He could. "Abram" received *promises*, not *commands for duty*, in this covenant. Its fulfillment depended entirely upon the faithfulness of God as the promiser.

Were others, besides the natural descendants of Abram, mentioned as parties to or beneficiaries of this covenant?

No; none at all.

How was this covenant sealed?

It had no seal. It was simply closed or ratified according to the custom of that day, by dividing the bodies of slain beasts and arranging the parts opposite each other; after which the contracting parties passed between the pieces, uttering the words of contract. As God was the only contractor in this covenant, only He performed the contracting action, causing the "smoking furnace and burning lamp" to represent Himself.

Did that entirely close up the covenant?

It did. Nothing more was done, or to be done.

What special reference is made to this covenant in Genesis xvii?

God assured "Abraham" that he would (קוּם qum) confirm, or cause to stand, the promises made to "Abram."

WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?

Two covenants; two classes of promises; two classes of purposes; two names changed; one covenant which only God could keep; one covenant for man and his seed to keep; the introduction of a new practice—circumcision; and a society formed in a man's household, which society was to be permanent for "all families" of the "many nations of the earth," but excluding the natural descendants

(as such) of the man selected as the head of the society at its organization.

The following contrast may be worthy of attention:

THE TWO COVENANTS IN CONTRAST.

With "*Abram*," aged eighty-five years, Genesis xii, xv:	With "*Abraham*," aged ninety-nine years, Genesis xii; xvii:
"Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and exceeding great reward." (Protection.)	"I am Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." (God's demand for service.)
"I will make of thee a great nation." (Limited.)	"In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Thou shalt be a father of many nations." (Unlimited).
"In that same day Jehovah (כָּרַת kārath) cut a covenant with Abram, saying: Unto thy seed have I given this land." (Promise for Canaan.)	"I will (קוּם qum) confirm my covenant. * * * I will give unto thee and thy seed the land." (Assurance for Canaan.)
Divine ratification of the covenant, but no token, and nothing for Abram and descendants to do but to trust and wait on God's promises.	Covenant sealed by the "token," circumcision, and Abraham and seed to "keep" the covenant.
"Abram's" wife, "Sarai."	"Abraham's" wife, "Sarah."
Promise of Genesis xii, 2, fulfilled in the covenant for one nation and the land of Canaan.	Promise of Genesis xii, 3, sealed in the covenant of circumcision (excepting Verses 7, 8), for all families and nations of the earth.

These covenants are so different that we, now, wonder that they should have ever been regarded as the same. We state:

CONCLUSIONS.

I. God had two purposes in calling Abraham: 1. Relating to the one nation and its Canaan inheritance. 2. Relating to all nations and families of the earth.

II. For these two purposes, there were two promises: 1. Extending to Canaan and one nation. 2. Extending to all the earth and its many nations.

III. The two promises had two means of fulfillment: 1. Through "Abram," the actual ancestor of one nation. 2. Through "Abraham," appointed to be the father of many nations.

IV. For the fulfillments were two covenants, made differently: 1. For one nation and Canaan, the covenant of slain beasts, with "Abram." 2. For the earth and the many nations, the covenant of circumcision, with "Abraham" and all his household.

V. The two covenants had different keepers: 1. For Canaan, only God. 2. For the "many nations," Abraham and seed.

VI. The keepers had different duties: 1. God was to care for "Abram" and the Canaan inheritance. 2. "Abraham" and seed were to serve God in holy living.

VII. A different fulfillment for each of the covenants: 1. Genesis xv. For one nation: fulfilled when Israel reached Canaan. 2. Genesis xvii. For all nations: fulfilled in proportion to the increase of Abraham's faith-seed in the earth.

VIII. Two distinctions as to inheritance: 1. Nothing to hinder the inheritance of Canaan; for it was assured by the promise of Almighty God. 2. Failure, on man's part, to keep the covenant of Genesis xvii would cut off from the privileges of the covenant.

IX. Two different arrangements as to the parties to the two covenants: 1. Genesis xv. Only God and "Abram." 2. Genesis xvii. God, Abraham, and household, and all future generations of the "seed."

X. Two covenants, with different times and circumstances: 1. Genesis xv. When "Abram" was eighty-five years old; and no mention of duties. 2. Genesis xvii. When "Abraham" was aged ninety-nine years; and called to special spiritual service, to be perpetuated in the seed, xviii, 19.

XI. Two covenants made under different names: 1. Genesis xv. With "Abram," the real father of one nation. 2. Genesis xvii. With "Abraham," the (נָתַן näthan) appointed father of many nations.

XII. Two covenants; one for limited, the other for unlimited inheritance: 1. Genesis xv. Canaan, for Abram and carnal seed. 2. Genesis xvii. Romans iv, 13. Abraham "heir of the world," and his faith-seed inheriting with him.

XIII. Preparations different for making the two covenants: 1. Genesis xv. Abram called to act; but his household not even mentioned. 2. Genesis xvii. Names of Abram and Sarai both changed; and all male members of the household ordered into the covenant to receive the token of the covenant, under penalty for omitting to act.

What was that society of Genesis xvii?

FACTS.

A. God called that society into being.

B. It had a specially sealed covenant for its members to keep.

C. It is the first and only society, on record, of God's organizing.

D. It is the only society to which God gave a token of membership.

E. Its token was a new thing in God's dealings with man.

F. It was organized with a believing man and his wife as its leading members.

G. Other specified members of their household were taken into its covenant and received its seal, though no mention is made of their faith, and some, the infants, could not exercise faith.

H. It was organized for permanent existence, and for extension to the "many nations" and "all families of the earth."

I. The believing head was required to render to God, personal spiritual service; to live a holy life; and God expected him to train his children and household in the fear of Jehovah, xviii, 19.

J. Obedience to the command—to receive the covenant-seal—was considered so important that God ordered a severe penalty for him who did not receive that token.

K. Paul says that Abraham was thus covenanted, "that he might be the father of all them that believe," irrespective of nation, condition, or sex—in the cases of all who are Christ's, Galatians iii; Romans iv.

L. The man-child who did not receive the "token," in the generations of the seed, was to be regarded and treated as a covenant-breaker; for by virtue of his connection with the believing parent, he was a member of the covenanted society.

Such are the facts which have come to us, so far. Review them all, in all their bearings; then we must say what that society was!

Gathering up our findings, as set forth in our Chapters IV, V, and VI, and combining them with succeeding studies, we say: *If we have not found the origin of the Visible Church, we do not know what that society was.*

We go further: If that was not God's organization of the Visible Church, the Bible does not give any account of its origin! We can find nothing else, anywhere, back of which we could not also find an organized people—a people organized for the worship and service of God, and so recognized by Him. If the search has been crowned with success, we may not have found what accords with man's ideas. But for anything of that kind we were not seeking. Our one idea is: What is God's own idea of His Church? No other is admissible, unless we can establish, as true, that God is to accept a Church from man; in the stead of man accepting a Church from God. But as all agree (theoretically, at least) that man is to receive from God, then that which God reveals in His word, as His idea of His Church,

must be accepted, as revealed; or—if because the revelation does not accord with our preconceived views, we will not accept it—we place ourselves in the attitude of rebellion against God. We cannot see any escape from this conclusion.

But have we, in truth, found what we sought? Carefully and with patient tediousness, we have followed the footsteps of a people organized for God's worship and service, as we found them in a path nearly two thousand years long. That path was very broad in the New Testament, but it became more and yet more narrow as we traced back, until it ended at the door of Abraham's tent. Not a sign of it could we find beyond! Some footprints we did see, further on; but they were only such as were made, here and there, by a solitary traveler in the spiritual desert as Noah, Enoch, and a few others, such as they, in that long-ago. Soon these disappeared. Those who made them left no "seed" to keep the way to God open; and so it was overgrown and lost in the rank growth of heathenism. Then we returned to Abraham's tent, and, after much study of God's visit and sayings there, we write, *God's Visible Church was born in Abraham's tent!* Moreover, we have this to say: We found what God made, and as He made it! Therefore, we take our humble place among those gathered there, and worship!

As this Church came from the hands of God, its Creator, it was almost as the earth in its young life, "without form and void." But "the Spirit of God moved upon" it and it grew apace until a power has gone forth out of the midst of it which is bringing Christ His own again. See Psalms ii, 6-8.

What shall we do with the fact before us? The records which led to it are in every Bible! We have not so much as looked at any other source of information. Is, or is not, "Thus saith the Lord" upon our findings?

CHAPTER XII.

THE SEED.

Ishmael and Isaac—God's will for the seed—Paul, Romans iv, 17—Seed, Galatians iii; Romans ix, 6–8—Covenant line—Jewish ideas about Gentile seed—"Confirmed before," in Galatians iii—Covenant promises and Gospel—Peter and Gentiles—Lessons.

HOW many readers of the Bible have noticed the sharp distinction, made between the "seed" and the natural descendants of Abraham? We are taught by our Apostle, of a most important difference. It was established in the making of the covenant of Genesis xvii.

It was natural that Abraham should desire favor for Ishmael, Verse 18, after God's promise that Isaac should be born. And why did God prefer one rather than the other? In Galatians iv, our Apostle explains to Gentiles that Ishmael was the son of Hagar the bondwoman, and was "born after the flesh," but that Isaac was the son of Sarah, the real wife of Abraham, and called, "the free woman"; and so, says he, "he of the free woman was by promise." In that Chapter, the two covenants are asserted (Verses 24, 26) as we found them. Paul uses "an allegory"—as he expresses it—making Mt. Sinai (where Israel was formed into a nation) illustrate the carnal covenant, and comparing the other to "Jerusalem which is above."

In Genesis xvii, 18–21, God said to Abraham (of the covenant of circumcision, made in that Chapter): "My covenant (qum) will I confirm with Isaac." And when it became necessary to remove Ishmael from the family, because of his "mocking" (xxi, 9)—his misusing and teasing of Isaac—God told Abraham: "Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." This, all

will recognize as an act of God's sovereignty. See Romans ix, 14–16. As with the line of grace, so with the line of the "seed." Both are of the will of God. That the seed-line was not of Abraham's natural descendants, is seen in many passages. In Galatians iv, 28, believing Gentiles are put into that line with Isaac. In the flesh, Ishmael was as nearly related to Abraham as was Isaac; indeed, was he not—in one sense—nearer, as God had to make special interference with the course of nature for the birth of Isaac? But through God's election only Isaac (of the two), was made the seed of the covenant. Carnal descent was thus thrown out of the reckoning, and only the spiritual seed were recognized. So was it to be for all generations. In the flesh Abraham is not our father, at all, but if we "walk in the steps of his faith," he is "the father of us all before God." In view of the covenants, "Abram" was the father of the flesh-seed; and "Abraham" was the father of the spiritual seed. In saying this, it is not supposed that anyone can so far err as to think we mean that Abraham was or is, in any way, the author of our spiritual life. He is called "the father of us all before God," as the first member whom God selected in the organization of the Visible Church; and he was made to stand at the head of it as the great exemplar of that faith which pleases God. It was in recognizing his faith that God gave the Visible Church and its covenant to the world. As before noted, in Romans iv, 13, Paul called him "the heir of the world." But all understand that it was not meant that he inherited the world in a carnal sense. As we regard the phrase, he and his spiritual seed were to be the Church of all the world. When we read Galatians iii, no thought of possessing either the world or Canaan, as "Abraham's seed," ever enters any mind. All understand that the promises in which we thus share, are entirely spiritual. "That the blessing of Abraham," says our teacher, in Galatians iii, 14, "might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the (*επαγγελια*, epaggelia) promised favor and blessing of the Spirit

through faith." We have shown that (Matthew i, 1) Jesus Christ was "the son of Abraham," that is, in His human genealogy, see Galatians iii, 16, 19. Thus it is by the faith-connection with Jesus Christ that we are of Abraham's seed. By our acceptance and confession of Christ, we become—each in his part—recognized members of the Visible Church of Christ which was organized in the tent of Abraham. As this man was the first member, so was he the father of the organization.

A study of Romans ix, 6–8, is further instructive. Paul says: "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the (natural) seed of Abraham, are they all (spiritual) children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Thus, whatever honor may attach to Abrahamic descent among men, it weighs nothing in God's reckoning. And why, after the words "they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God," should any think that all of Israel was the Church of God? Our Apostle contradicts that idea, twice in this passage. The Church was *in* Israel; in the nation; and when the Great Reformer—Jesus—came, He knew whom to recognize and whom to reject among the people of Israel. See Matthew iii, 9–12; Hebrews ix, 10. It seemed almost impossible for the Jews to realize that all of Abraham's flesh-born descendants were not the children of God; but ignorance is not excusable with us, when we have such teachings as those of our Lord, in John viii, 39–41, and of our Apostle as cited above.

The covenant-line is: 1. Through Isaac, Genesis xvii, 19; xxi, 12. 2. Through Christ, Galatians iii, 16. 3. Through all who are Christ's, Galatians iii, 29. Therefore the Apostle could teach Gentiles who had become Christ's: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of the promise."

The Israelites looked for salvation through two sources: The Abrahamic covenant, and the Mosaic law. Both were

from God. In that law—through its God-ordained sacrifices—they had communed and associated with God during so many centuries that they felt sure of salvation in that way. Therefore, (Acts xv, 1–5) they clung to "the law of Moses" even after accepting Christ. They could not understand why any of the children of Abraham, serving under that law, would not be saved, and they demanded that Christianized Gentiles should also conform to it in order to be saved. In Romans iv and Galatians iii, Paul guarded the Gentiles against such errors by showing that as Christ had fulfilled the law, "the inheritance" of the promise was only for those who were of the faith. Then, to show that the Mosaic law had not, in any way, interfered with the covenant and its promises, he says in Galatians iii, 15–17, that even a man's covenant stands intact after being confirmed. Then he argues that all the more certainly "the covenant which (προκεκυρωμενην, — prokekurōmenên) was confirmed beforehand of God in Christ, the law, which was (given) four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." (See our Chapter XIX.) The law filled up a gap between the promise to Abraham and its fulfillment in and by Christ. "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made," Verse 19. To what was that law "added"? To the covenant-dispensation, surely, for there was nothing else to which it could have been added. Under that the people had lived until they came to Mt. Sinai, where the law was "added." Nothing can be plainer. When the "seed to whom the promise was made"—that is, Christ—appeared, He fulfilled the law; then sent the gospel to the Gentiles according to the promise of the covenant. He is the "mediator" mentioned in this verse; first between God and man in His atonement; then, between separated Israelites and Gentiles in His gospel to all (See our Chapters IV and V). The law was in His "hand"—under His control and direction. Abraham stood as the covenant-head

of the Church, receiving the promises. Christ stood as the mediator-head, fulfilling the promises to the "many nations," Therefore were those promises preached, immediately after the ascension of our Lord, as being not only for Israel but also for those who were "afar off." Yet the doctrine did not seem to have been fully understood at first, even by the Apostles; for, (Acts x) when God's Spirit made Gentiles call for the gospel, a special revelation had to be given to Peter—the preacher of Acts ii and iii—before he realized his duty of going to them. And when, according to the promise, gospel gifts were bestowed upon the Gentiles, "they of the circumcision, which believed, were astonished * * * because that on the Gentiles, also, was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit;" and Peter had to defend his act of preaching to Gentiles. "The Apostles and brethren that were in Judea * * * contended" with him about what he had done; so completely were the Old promises misunderstood or overlooked. One was: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed;" the other: "Thou shalt be a father of many nations." God gave them an "object-lesson" in the household of Cornelius. Then they renounced their error and gave up their prejudices. It was God's Church! Why should He not do as he pleased? We realize that it must have cost those law-Jews a hard struggle to abandon lifelong convictions into which God, himself, had seemed to educate them from the very beginning.

What do we see? That the most earnest men—men most sure that they are right—may be mistaken. Even while seeking God's truth, the most sincere and watchful may fall into error. This thought keeps us in fear and trembling throughout these studies. The only safety is in knowing nothing, of ourselves, and in hearing only "the mind of the Spirit." We feel that there is danger of substituting our own minds—putting our preferred constructions upon the utterances of God's Word, instead of looking only upon what the Spirit has caused to be recorded.

Who does not know that a man may, so to express it, *make* the Bible speak as he desires, in many things? Israel brought prepossessions and educated views to the study of the things of Christ. Then they read the Scriptures through the medium of formed convictions. In studying the causes of their errors, we Gentiles may learn a lesson of distrust as to the things most surely believed by us. Have we believed by the Word of God, only? Or have mere human teachings and influences framed our "faith and manners"? In the latter case, we have also been instructed in the art of hearing only as we desire, what the Word says; and this may be in an utter unconsciousness that it really is.

Should any charge us with having fallen into this very way, we offer no defense except in the request that what we have written be subjected to a most rigid comparison with the records, as all have access to them in the Word of God. We have tried, earnestly, to be impartial and true, for in our "heart of hearts" we have wished and sought for the correct answer to the question of these studies.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM ABRAHAM TO JESUS.

Why Israel was unbound—The "Schoolmaster"—God's "Son"—The Ten Commandments and the Abrahamic covenant, Exodus xx—The law-covenant, Exodus xxiv—Identity of Genesis xvii and Exodus xix, xx. The Church after Sinai. Always a "remnant"—Testimony to origin. Isaiah li, 1–3—Church beginnings and growth—From Mamre to the Gentiles—The "remnant," Romans xi—Prophecy of the "reformation"—Old and New faith meet.

IN this Chapter we are to walk with Old Testament faith until it meets that of the New. The Psalmist tells (cv) why Israel was delivered from Egypt; and how God remembered His covenant with "the fathers," and "brought forth his people with joy * * * that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws." God's truth was at stake! His promises must be fulfilled! His people were to be freed! We cannot study that history, and yet believe that God was dealing only with a carnal nation. He called them "mine anointed." We believe that in delivering Israel He also delivered His Church. It was to dwell in Canaan as its temporary home—like a growing child within nursery-bounds—until matured for going forth into the world. On the way to that home, it sojourned a while at Mt. Sinai to arrange its garments of travel; and there, in wondrous revelations, God mapped out the way to Calvary—putting His "first-born" under the care of a "schoolmaster" called "The Law." He had said to the Pharaoh: "Let my people go that they may serve me." * * * "Israel is my son, even my first-born. And I say unto thee, let my son go that he may serve me." At a later date this language is again applied to that people. In Hosea xi, 1, God said: "Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." In the light of preceding studies these

utterances read that God had a spiritual heritage in Israel. He could not mean the first-born among the nations; for other nations had existed before Israel was formed. In Egypt they were only a mass of groaning slaves, not a nation. We think those words reach back to the covenant with Abraham, in Genesis xvii. Previous to that, we could find no organization which God would call His own. Our studies say that the Church was then created, and that, above all things, God would naturally call, "my first-born." It antedates the organization of the nation by centuries, and, as we have seen, was a new thing in God's dealings with men. The records show that it was created for God's service, and as a training-school for His people and their "seed." Therefore, at Mt. Sinai, God's first claim upon Israel was for religious service. He had delivered them that they might serve Him, says the Psalmist; and so God spoke to the Pharaoh. The demand at Mt. Sinai was but a larger form of that made upon Abraham in Genesis xvii, 1. See Exodus xix, 5. In addition to that demand, God said to Abraham: "Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations." At Mt. Sinai, some of the after-generations of the seed were called upon to "keep" God's covenant and obey His voice. The giving of "The Ten Commandments" is generally regarded as the prominent event at Sinai. They were delivered three times: 1. Orally. 2. On the two tables of stone which Moses broke. 3. On the tables which were preserved, Exodus xxiv, xxxii. They are God's code of spiritual life; not a civil code, except in so far as duty to God makes us better citizens under any government. Therefore, Moses said to the people: "God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not," Exodus xx, 20. In Exodus xix, 7, Moses laid God's words before (זְקֵנִים zeqenim) "the elders;" not before "the rulers" of the people (See our Chapter XXXI). In Verse 10, we read that the people were commanded to "sanctify" themselves in view of appearing before God. He was to speak the

great "Ten Words" to them. When these were first given, the people stood with Moses at the foot of the mount, xix, 17–25; xx, 18–20. When the two preserved tables of stone were given, then it was that God also dictated orderly plans for His service—the tabernacle-church; the Ark; the altar for burnt-offerings," and the ordination of the Aaronic order of the priesthood. And then that "schoolmaster," the law, was introduced (See Galatians iii, 24, 25,) whose mission it was to educate the "seed" towards the Christ who should come "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." In the law-system the Christ was preached to Israel until the time of Calvary. "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world" was continually held up to faith's view in the sacrificial offerings ordained in the giving of the law at Sinai. But was that gospel preached in or outside of the Church?

God had two distinct dealings with the people at Sinai. In Exodus xix, 3–6, is His direct proposal that they should agree to be His people—that is, He required a new consecration. In Verse 8 is their assent to the proposal. The whole transaction amounts to reconsecration to God. He had said to Abraham, for himself and seed: "Ye shall keep my covenant." That was the sum of the demand at Sinai. True, the ceremonial law-covenant involved such service, in large degree; but that was a special and separate deliverance to Moses afterwards (Exodus xxiv), and its words were written in a book, by Moses, and read to the people apart from the immediate presence of God to whom their representatives afterwards went, Verses 9–11. This covenant was introduced with the "sprinkling of blood"; and it was the educator of the people, in anticipation of the atonement of Christ. This it is which was called "old," in Hebrews viii, in contrast with the gospel dispensation. But in the transactions of Exodus xix and xx, are no sacrificial offerings nor blood-sprinklings. The people, with their priests, were commanded to "sanctify" themselves for appearing before their God; and when He spoke to them He gave—in the

first of "The Ten Words"—the exact principles of the introduction to the Abrahamic covenant. It is seen thus:

GENESIS XVII.	EXODUS XIX; XX.
To Abraham:	To Moses and Israel:
"I am the Almighty God."	"I am Jehovah, thy God."
"Walk before me and be thou perfect."	"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

The Ten Commandments were of the covenant which God called upon Israel to "keep," Exodus xix, 5, and may be designated as a free expression, or an elaboration of the demand made upon Abraham. Put those commandments into one sentence, and where is another that will contain them? The demand was one—upon "the father" and upon "the seed." In Matthew v, our Lord shapes the New Dispensation form of the doctrine.

If we follow the common version of the Bible, it is found difficult, after the Theocracy, to distinguish between religious and civil in the history. But that the Church continued as a distinct body—Israel within Israel—admits of no doubt. Midway, among the preachers of the Old Dispensation, stood Isaiah; and was he not addressing the society whose organization we found in Genesis xvii? Speaking for God, he cried: "Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness; ye that seek Jehovah. * * * Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him, alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For Jehovah shall comfort Zion." See Isaiah li, 1–3. Are not they "who follow after righteousness," and "who seek Jehovah," of the Church of God? and did not the prophet address them as Paul afterward addressed the Gentiles—calling Abraham their "father"? And is not "Zion"—from time immemorial—the scriptural title of the Church? It had grown much larger when Isaiah appeared; and what of its increase since his day? It began with one man and his household! But it is filling the earth! Is

this the "day" which Abram "saw, and was glad" in the seeing? John viii, 56. Did he foresee the time when God would change his name and put his new name in the Church's earthly history so close to the "name that is above every name;" and when the records of God would be "The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of * * * Abraham"? It is only as God purposed and said when He gave the covenant to Abraham!

In Mark iv, 30–33, our Lord said: "The kingdom of God * * * is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth; but when it is sown it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs." And what organization on earth had a smaller beginning than that little society in the household of Abraham? And what other is now greater than that society, known as The Visible Church?

As we study it—so small in its birth—watching its growth and goings until, with all Israel, it crosses the gulf centuries wide, between the Dispensations; stopping at Bethlehem of Judea to hear the singing of the heavenly hosts greeting a lost world because of its Saviour's birth; taking the last steps in the Old Dispensation to ascend Calvary that it may receive the holy blood-sprinkling of which it had been so long taught in the sacrifices, and for which it had so long waited; tarrying at Jerusalem for the baptism with the Holy Spirit; from Jerusalem and the great Pentecost, going out on its new and broader way into the Gentile world; walking there in an ever-broadening path, more than eighteen hundred years long, until it comes where it may put upon our bowed heads and into our consecrated homes "the blessing of Abraham," through Jesus Christ, as was promised of old—in all this, we of today, see what wonders God hath wrought out of beginnings which human wisdom would have despised!

So did the Church come, from studying the prophesied Christ of the Old Dispensation, to worship and follow the manifested Christ of the New Dispensation whithersoever

He would lead. And what teachings had God given through the "schoolmaster," all the way from Sinai to Calvary!

Surely it is a dull eye that can see no more than carnal history of a nation in Exodus, Leviticus, etc., when the light of Hebrews viii and ix, shines upon the records! Our Christ, though among the shadows, was in all those old ordinances. So the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews believed when he set forth his teachings about the Christ, by illustrations taken from what was ordained and done in Israel of long ago. As we passed through the ranks of the Old Dispensation saints, we had their greetings in the language of our faith; indeed, it is because they first learned that language that it has become our own. The songs the Church sings today—and will sing until earth is exchanged for heaven—are the songs once chanted by the "sons of Korah," Israel's select singers. The "Shepherd" whom we follow, is the same to whom David looked that He might lead him beside "the still waters," and cause him "to lie down in green pastures." The gospel of the New Testament is but the continuance of what was preached by the ministers of the Old Testament. They and we only stand on opposite sides of the cross of the one Christ—they looking forward; we looking backward, so facing each other as all eyes seek the same Saviour. If Isaiah says: "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities," Paul responds: "Yea; for He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." If David prays: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin," John answers: "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Were not all of the one Church?

But in its progress towards the fulfillment of the covenant-promises, God's "first-born" did not always have pleasant experiences, nor live in prosperous circumstances. "Zion" seemed often almost destroyed through back-slidings, apostacy and persecutions. So was it in Elijah's time,

when he cried to God: "I, even I only, am left," 1 Kings, xix. But our Apostle writes: "What saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved unto myself, seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." Thus it is shown that even under such discouragements as almost drove Elijah to despair, the spiritual Israel still existed in the apostate nation. In Romans xi, Paul said: "God hath not cast away his people which he fore-knew." Again: "Even so, then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." So of "Israel within Israel" when Paul wrote. The "remnant" was never extinct and by it the Church was preserved that the promise "might be sure to all the seed." We see, also, that God's Church was never dependent upon numbers for its life. A remnant may as truly be the Church as a great multitude. God has never lacked a people to serve Him, since the organization of the society in the household of Abraham. When the last of the prophets wrote, the Church had become very corrupt; but "a remnant" saved it; and it was the "remnant" which Jesus gathered to himself out of Israel, in His coming. The prophet, standing in the midst of church-corruptions, foretold a time of reformation which should bless those who waited for the Christ, in truth; and John the Baptist afterwards caught up the prophecy as it neared fulfillment, and preached of the coming purification. Said God, through the prophet Malachi: "Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Then, as we gaze across the dark, wide distance separating the days of prophecy from the days of fulfillment, we see Jesus, "the son of Abraham," standing ready to apply the healing which the prophet had promised, and to begin the reformation. And He remembered the days of old in His work; for He told how Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and was glad. As "I AM," He had filled the past with His presence—confirmed the covenant to Abraham and his seed, and held the law in His "hand."

He it was who dealt with "the fathers" as "Jehovah," God in Christ, though not then in the flesh. He walked through all the "sojourning" of the "seed" receiving the faith of each generation until He opened, "in the body of his flesh," the door of His Church to them that were "afar off" that the Gentiles might enter and "rejoice with his people." So did He make good the promises of His covenant with Abraham for "all nations of the earth." That He found His Church even among the degenerate Jews of the Roman bondage, we have seen. To cleanse it, His reformation-work was severe; but He kept the remnant as His own, for He came not to destroy but to fulfill the promises upon which His Church had lived. And what a sight was that—the march of the Old Testament faith-heroes beyond Calvary, as they came along the highway of the centuries to clasp hands with the new ingathering of the Gentiles that both might bow, as brethren, before the one Saviour, by whose blood the reconciliation was sealed, because He died for both! Was it not to this that the Apostle looked when he wrote, in Hebrews xi, 39, 40: "And these all having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promise (in fulfillment): God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect?" (The verb is τελειοω, teleioō —to reach full development).

Having now completed our journey, from Abraham to Jesus, we may leave the country of the Old Dispensation and follow the fortunes of the Church into the New Dispensation, where there is much more to learn.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHURCH, OR CHURCHES?

Plural word when opened to Gentiles—Celsus on religion—The religion of Christ—Spiritual oneness—Visible oneness—Tabernacle and Temple, central points in Israel—Were synagogues independent?—Guiding propositions—The word "church" in New Testament—"Churches." Teachings in Romans xii, 4, 5; 1 Corinthians xii—No "bodies" of Christ—Divisions at Corinth forbidden, 1 Corinthians iii—Our perplexities as to present divisions.

IN reaching the New Testament, we find the word "churches," in translations of "ekklêsiai." As we have seen, the word "church," does not occur in the Old Testament at all; and the word "synagogue" but once, Psalms lxxiv. There were bodies of worshipers at different points; but from the time of the tabernacle in the wilderness, to the building of the temple at Jerusalem, there seems to have been a common bond uniting all the people as one brotherhood. We do not find any indication of, what seems to have been, a plurality of churches until after the ascension of our Lord, when the gospel was sent to the Gentiles. To that time there was certainly only one people of God; and all had common fellowship as one body. There is no trace of the state of things which exists among the people of God now. When, therefore, we come upon the mention of "churches," after the call of the Gentiles, it is natural to ask: Were these separate and independent bodies, for the needs of Gentiles? or were they still, as of old, only local parts of the one Church of God?

Celsus, the Roman infidel, is reported to have said: "A man must be literally crazy, if he thinks Greeks and Barbarians, Romans and Scythians, bondmen and freemen, can have one and the same religion." He was one of the first writers against Christianity; and one would think that

he was making a special attack on Paul's teachings about the oneness in Christ, as he used some of Paul's terms; see Colossians iii, 11. It was in considering the modern differences, among Christians, that the above-quoted words came to mind. Sometimes we have thought that our divisions must have, in the eyes of the world, almost the appearance of different religions. Indeed we have heard, now and then, that there "*must be different phases of religion for different classes of people.*" If any such ideas are according to God's Word, we shall no doubt find them in our studies.

In some degree, the denominational conditions might make a "Celsus" satisfied with his opinion. But, in fact, all evangelical denominations hold one faith—have one religion. The religion of Christ has one characteristic of water in its adaptation to the needs of all peoples of the earth. Possibly such was the Prophet's thought—and our Lord's also—when comparing salvation to water, in their preaching. Because under sin's wrecking of our race, human need is the same everywhere, God has provided one religion to meet the common want. When the Old faith came from beyond Calvary to clasp hands with the newborn faith of Gentiles on this side of the sacred hill, both drank at the one "fountain opened * * * to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness," Zechariah xiii, 1.

But our question is not so much about one religion, as about the Church, which we understand to be the propagator of the knowledge of the true God. Did God organize His Church to exist in one body, or in several bodies? We cannot consider any human opinions, in seeking the answer. What is God's own idea about His Church? To His Word for the answer!

Doubtless all believe in a spiritual oneness—the oneness of the Invisible Church, which is composed of all the redeemed, and which can be fully known to none but God. That is not our study. What of the Visible Church? How

does God teach that this should exist? Clearly, from the organization in Abraham's tent to the ingathering of the Gentiles, there were no divisions like those of our day. Within the bounds of Israel, the people of God were one and had one system of religion and service. To the death of Jacob, whom we regard as the last of the Patriarchs, the government of God's people was patriarchal. After his death there came a change which is noticed in our Chapter XXXI. But, nowhere in our Old Testament studies was there any suggestion of divisions. It comes here and now in the word "churches." First, the wilderness-tabernacle; then the temple service kept "the faith and manners" of Israel in oneness. One interruption there was, and that was in the revolt of the ten tribes which Jeroboam led off into heathenism. But among those remaining true to God's service, the bonds were not broken. Even the captive—far away from native land—remembered the "faith and manners" of the home service, and worshiped with his face towards Jerusalem—a touching picture!

Thus, in all places and conditions, God held His people together as one organization. They had no church polity except that received from Him by direct revelation. True, in distant lands and nearer localities, synagogues were organized; but it is plain that these were not differing denominations. All were local members of the one body whose "heart" was the temple at Jerusalem; and every worshiper knew himself to be in the one fellowship of God's people. Under the New Dispensation God has ordained no central place, as the heart of the Church. In John iv, our Lord said to the Samaritan woman: "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. * * * But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him." So then, wherever men truly worship "the Father," there is the home of the Church under the dispensation of Christ.

For our guidance in the present study, we adopt the following rules:

I. Of the two words—Church, and Churches—the one which is found to represent the will of God, as revealed in His Word, is to be accepted for our "faith and manners."

II. If God's Word shows that the Church should exist as independent parts, that is right; but if it shows that the "Churches" are only the visible members of the one body, then all denominational divisions are wrong, being opposed to God's idea of His Church.

We do not propose to argue these propositions; but only to speak as God's voice decides. We find the following:

Matthew xvi, 18: "I will build my Church."

Matthew xviii, 17: "Tell it unto the Church."

Acts ii, 47: "The Lord added to the Church daily."

Acts v, 11: "Great fear came upon all the Church."

Ephesians i, 22: "Christ "head over all things to the Church."

Ephesians iii, 10: "Known by the Church."

Ephesians v, 23: "Christ the head of the Church."

Ephesians v, 24: "As the Church is subject unto Christ."

Ephesians v, 25: "Christ also loved the Church."

Ephesians v, 27: "A glorious Church."

Ephesians v, 32: "Concerning Christ and the Church."

Philippians iii, 6: "Persecuting the Church."

Colossians i, 18: Christ "the head of the body, the Church."

Colossians i, 24: "For his body's sake, which is the Church."

1 Timothy iii, 5: "How shall he take care of the Church of God?"

1 Timothy iii, 15: "The Church * * * the pillar and ground of the truth."

Hebrews ii, 12: "In the midst of the Church."

In some passages the Invisible Church may be meant; but in others it is the Visible. In Romans xvi, 5; 1 Corinthians xvi, 19, etc., the Church in the house is mentioned.

In Philippians iii, 6, the words "persecuting the Church," belong to the history in Acts viii, 3, etc., where we read "As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church." But when that persecuting work ceased, we read in Acts ix, 31: "Then had the *Churches* rest." Here, for the first time, the word occurs in the plural number; What are we to understand? How could the "*Church*" of Acts viii, 3; Philippians iii, 6, be "the *Churches;*" or, the Churches be the Church?

In some passages, just quoted, things are said of the "Church," which are never said of "the Churches." For example: "Gave himself for the Church; head of the Church; loved the Church." There are no such records about the "Churches." What then? Were the "Churches" left out of the love, work and headship of Christ?

In Romans xvi, 16, Paul wrote: "The Churches of Christ salute you." Then, the "Churches" must also be Christ's. What shall we say? If the "Church," and "the Churches" are both Christ's, must there not be some relation, or bond of union between them? (If the reader thinks this manner of speech a little silly, let him remember that it is just about as the mind would have to proceed where one is to know nothing, but only takes what he finds as he finds it.)

Again and again we read of the Church, "the body of Christ." Sometimes, at least, this must refer to the Visible Church; for Paul wrote to organizations on earth, telling them: "Now ye are the body of Christ," as in 1 Corinthians xii, 27. What, then? Are "the Churches" the "bodies" of Christ? In seeking explanations, we come upon the record in Romans xii, 4, 5: "As we have many members in (our) one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ,

and every one members one of another." So in 1 Corinthians xii: "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. * * * Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular," or, individually, as the Greek (μερος—meros,) means. But all this may refer to spiritual oneness. Yet it was written to visible organizations; and we cannot but wonder if the form of each should not resemble the other? In Hebrews viii, 5, we are taught that the priests of the Old Dispensation served as "the example and shadow of heavenly things." Is not the example like the thing represented in it? So in Hebrews ix, 23, the ordinances of the Old Dispensation are called "the patterns of things in the heavens." Must there not be a likeness in the things patterned, to the pattern? Is the Invisible, or purely spiritual Church one body? and is the Visible Church of many differing bodies? We give the questions as they come. In Romans xii and 1 Corinthians xii, Paul was writing to visible bodies; and illustrates their oneness by the unity of the human body in all its members. He told each of those churches, "ye are the body of Christ." Did he mean that the Church at Rome was one body of Christ; that at Corinth, another; that at Colosse, another; and so of all local organizations? Such inquiries may seem insignificant; but what are we doing? We are trying to find the truth, by the records only, without expressing an opinion of our own. We say, If the state of things was as questioned here, we have the right to expect at least a few teachings about "the *bodies* of Christ."

We remember two things learned: I. Never rely upon single, detached verses for all doctrine on a subject. II. Always interpret in accordance with actual facts ascertained. In our Chapter V, we found that no new Church was organized for the reception of Gentiles; but that they came into and were made fellow-heirs, or joint-partakers in and with the one body of God's people already existing. We

have not been able to find any record of changes made, nor of a new system introduced. On the contrary, when some sought to make divisions—denominations they would have been—in the Church at Corinth, Paul rebuked them sharply and taught them that Christ was not divided, therefore His Church ought not to be. Was he right? See 1 Corinthians i, 10–13; iii, 3, 4. The prospect was for one denomination to be called after Paul; another, after Cephas; another, after Christ, etc. Paul said that such divisions were "carnal," that they were κατα ανθρωπον (kata anthrōpon)—"according to men." But for that rebuke, the city of Corinth would soon have had as many denominations as has any one of our modern cities. Now if it be true that his illustrations of oneness, noticed above, applied to the Invisible Church, it is just as true that he made application of them to the Visible Church at Corinth. Is it not so? But, what shall we think? If such divisions were wrong at Corinth, in Paul's day, what has since occurred to make them right in our day? We wish to understand. If divisions were not allowable then, why and how are they so now? And why are our denominations any less, "kata anthrōpon?" Such questions assert their right to be considered. The Apostle was not rebuking attempts to divide the Invisible body; but that Visible body at Corinth, 1 Corinthians i, 2; 2 Corinthians i, 1. Is it not so? We cannot see in that rebuke, other than a sort of "slap in the face" to all attempts looking to denominationalizing the Visible Church. But this puts us in great perplexity as we look upon the Church of today. It becomes necessary to inquire upon what grounds our divisions can be justified, if they are according to God's own idea of His Church. We know that great and good men differ in this matter, and we respect them; but we are going to do what we can to forget them in this study. What is God's idea? Of several things we are sure: God's Word and ideas have not changed; the Gospel has not changed; our Lord Jesus has not changed. Who, then, will tell us; or where shall we find other

revelation of the Divine will for the existence of the Church as now seen?

A question comes to us: Were the "teacher of the Gentiles" now to write an epistle, how would he address it, to which of our denominations? Or, were he to visit us, what would he say of our divisions, denominations? We cannot answer. We close this chapter in much perplexity; not knowing how to fit what we have found in God's Word, to what we see in the Church. But we are thinking of Ephesians iv, 3, 6.

CHAPTER XV.

VISIBLE DIVISIONS.

Were the "churches" denominations?—Sects, etc.—Guiding propositions. On historical authority—How divisions may arise—Then, and now, in Church work—The little towns—About "essentials," 1 Corinthians iii, 11–15—Army illustration.

SOME expression of thought may be allowed, after the perplexities of the last chapter. In preceding studies we cannot see that the Church as God formed it, and as it continued to the close of Apostolic ministry, was other than one body. Coming upon the word "Churches," we were not able to reconcile that word with the singular form "church." We were obliged to say: If the plural form means "denominations," then each local organization was a separate "body of Christ." But the Bible does not teach of a number of bodies of Christ. Then what are our denominations, Scripturally viewed? They are not what the Bible calls "sects," though in our day that term is sometimes applied to them. Among the sects of the Bible, the "Pharisees" made great pretensions of loyalty to God; yet they were noted for substituting human traditions and interpretations in the stead of the real teachings of God's Word. It was one of their distinctive marks, and formed one reason of our Lord's severest condemnations of them. They claimed to be God's true people—the Church—and held the claims of others in contempt. What they truly were, may be gathered from reading Matthew xxiii, 13–29; xv, 2–6; Mark vii, 5–13; Colossians ii, 8. The Greek word for "sect," is αἵρεσις (hairesis), meaning, "a taking; a conquering; a taking to one's self; choice," etc. The idea is that the sectarian chooses for himself, without due submission to God's revealed will, what he will believe and teach. He really rebels against God while professing to be governed

by Him. Other sects mentioned in the Bible, but which were not of the Church, were "Sadducees, Herodians," etc., all opposers of Jesus in His explanations of God's will. Sadducees were independent thinkers who rejected what did not suit them in the Scriptures—as future rewards and punishments. To avoid responsibility, it was necessary that they should deny the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, and all spirit-life; which they, accordingly did. Herodians were more a political party, than a religious sect. They had little care for things outside of politics, we think. To all such as these Jesus refused recognition, and often condemned their hypocrisy and other sins.

The word σχισμα (schisma) is often used, meaning "a rent, division into parties," and the like. In 1 Corinthians xi, 18, of our version, it is translated by "divisions"; and in Verse 19, αἱρεσις (hairesis) is translated by "heresies," in contrast with δοκιμοι (dokimoi)—"approved ones" in the Church. The latter were φανεροι (phaneroi) made known by the contrast with the sectarians. See Romans xvi, 10, and the word "tried," in James i, 12.

In 2 Peter ii, 1–3, "false teachers" are those who used "feigned words" for selfish ends; and who brought in (αἱρεσεις απολειας—haireseis apoleias) "sects of destruction." By these explanations it is seen that our word "denominations" has not the meaning of the word "sect"; nor do we see that the sects of the Bible developed into our denominations. In some respects they are alike, as church-divisionists; but the real difference is as great as between light and darkness. Those sects were disobedient to God, and rejected Christ, often with much malignity; but our denominations—all known as evangelical—recognize and accept Christ as the one object of faith and as the One Head of the Church, professing obedience to the laws of God as dictated or revealed by Him.

We now shape the two propositions of the preceding chapter into rules for this study, also:

I. If visible divisions are found to be authorized, in the Bible-history of the Church, they are right.

II. If the Divine records do not, in any way, authorize our divisions, they must be un-scriptural, and as Paul expresses it in 1 Corinthians iii, 3, *κατ' ἀνθρωπον* (kata anthrōpon)—"conformable to men."

This shuts us out from all appeals to ancient history, or any history not in the Bible. We have Scriptural precedent for excluding all such appeals in seeking God's will for His Church. The Pharisees justified their teachings by appealing to the "traditions" of the fathers. What was that but an appeal to their ancient, or "church history," of human origin? And that was the very thing which our Lord most severely condemned in them. A reading of Matthew xv is very suggestive. Take one sentence: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Or this: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Our Lord's position may be stated thus: No history, however ancient, and no human authority, however venerable, can be authoritative when and where conflicting with the Word of God.

We can easily understand how divisions may arise out of no wrong intentions; or may be projected by good, well-meaning men—men intending the service of God and His Church. But we also understand that good intentions are not always a guarantee of rightness.

On the other hand, divisions may develop from germs of passion, ambition, prejudice, etc. In the records of Matthew xviii, 1; xx, 20, 21; Mark ix, 34; Luke ix, 46; xxii, 24, we see how the best and holiest men may err, and be sustained by their friends. Ambition for prominence in the kingdom of Christ manifested itself in the very presence of our Lord. Has human nature changed since then, even sanctified human nature? Were these studies among the writings of uninspired men, we might have much to say along this line. But we only repeat, under authority

of Christ,—the Head of the Church: Ancient claims—*as such*—are not just and right, nor agreeable to the will of God. The oldest historical record gives us an account of Cain as his brother's murderer, and testifies that sin was then practiced. But all know that murder and other sins are not right, just because the history testifies that they existed as ancient practices. Now the Bible which forbids those sins, also forbids and condemns the practice of appealing to ancient histories for the will of God, and makes God's revelations, in His own Book, the only authoritative source of information. What cannot be found—in some way—justified in the Bible, cannot be according to God's will. The only question with which the Church has to do is: What does the Word of God teach, or justify? Apply this to our visible divisions. Does the Bible justify, or condemn them? Are they "conformable to man," and thus "carnal"? or are they conformable to God, and so spiritual?

The Apostle who was sent to teach us, seems to speak their condemnation in no uncertain terms. And does it not appear reasonable that what was true of the local churches in Paul's day, ought to be true of them in our day? Why not, if all are of one God, one Lord, one Spirit, and one Book? What do our studies indicate? They *more* than indicate that all the churches of the Book of Acts and of the epistles were only the members of one great body. Of this, more in future chapters.

We have been wondering whether our divisions are better for the age in which we live? Do we serve as a check upon error in each other, and incite one another to good works? Does one denomination suit some classes of people better than another? We have heard such sayings; and, to us, the last of these questions has a very serious look. If there be in the "faith and manners" of any denomination that which justly prejudices any sinner against it, more than against others holding the truth as it is in Jesus, that thing must be wrong! Those who cannot offer a church-home to all classes of repenting and believing

sinners, must have added something not in keeping with the gospel sent to all. We feel sure of this; for there is only one gospel for the whole world! Our Apostle asks: "Is Christ divided?" What is the answer? Are souls differently constituted now, so that Paul could not preach as profitably to one as to another? or, that some cannot come into one of the "churches" as well as into another? Have several plans of salvation, or several systems of "faith and manners" been developed since Apostolic times, to suit emergencies evolved in the advance of the human race? Was not the all-wise God wise enough to conceive and put into operation a plan of salvation which would last to all ages? But another question: What kept the churches "straight;" and what incited to good works in Apostolic days? Oneness was the form of the church-existence then, Visible oneness, as we have found, and will hereafter show. Yet there was no lack among the churches of the New Testament in adherence to right doctrine, nor in the inciting to good works. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians includes in its address: "The saints which are in Achaia,"—that is, in the towns lying along the coast of the gulf, Lepanto. He says, Chapter ix, 2: "I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready (with its religious offerings) a year ago; and your zeal (ἠρετισε, êretise) hath stimulated very many." Thus the churches of Macedonia were incited to more activity by the zeal of the churches of Achaia.

To the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians i, 7, 8), Paul wrote about the results of their faithfulness: "Ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia; * * * also, in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad." Thus the Thessalonian church incited Achaia, and the churches of Achaia incited the churches of Macedonia. Yet there were no competing denominations fighting for supremacy, and bristling with war about "doctrinal points," and so "keeping each other straight."

Those local members of the one great body worked in fraternal and generous rivalry; and our Apostle used the good deeds of one to stimulate the others. It was the Apostolic plan. It is known that many think we do more, as denominations, than the Church did in the New Testament times; but two things may be considered: There are many more now to do the service; and our advantages are unspeakably greater. Would we find room for boasting if the New Testament Christians had been conditioned as we are? So, too, it has been said that we do more, as denominations, than we otherwise would. That is an assumption. The proof is not attainable. One may think that we would be able to do far more, and would do more, for the Redeemer's kingdom *were we not so engrossed and handicapped in extending and preserving our own lines.* What is the truth? Is not church-strength divided and frittered away in the denominational interests of every little town? There are many places where one organization and one gospel preacher would abundantly meet the needs; yet in such places every denomination must have its own church and minister. (Is that, in truth, that the Lord's work may be done? or is it for our own interests as "churches"?) Thus the preaching-forces are divided, and the people are cultivated in part for Christ, and in part for denominational ends. If all were one, would not our power be greater and better applied? The general contention is that denominations are right and best; and this, also, is an assumption, an unproved theory. How is it known? There has been no experience among us upon which to base the assertion. Those who thus theorize are men who sincerely love the Lord and His work. But that which perplexes us is this: We cannot find a shadow of support, in the Bible, for all that is said so confidently. If it is right and best that the Church should so exist, why did not God so organize it? or at least give a revelation to that effect? There seems to be a clash between what is seen in the Word of God and human opinions about the matter.

In 1 Corinthians iii, 11–15, is a teaching which may mean that our divisions are not fatal to salvation, even if not scriptural. Paul says: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble (what are these but terms to represent different views?), every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he, himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." Why saved if he built of wrong or worthless materials? Because *he built upon the right foundation.* That is the essential! All are right so far as they build there. But the after-works may be "conformable to men," therefore must detract from true service to our Lord. Was it for this reason that Paul added: "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon"? Is not this an admonition that duty to Christ and His Church is not determined by our ideas and preferences? It must be that when God's will is revealed, harm will come if we substitute our thoughts and ways. It may be so even in non-essentials. We see significance in the fact that Paul wrote the teaching in immediate connection with rebukes given to would-be divisionists at Corinth. One would build upon Paul, another upon Peter, etc., and so church relations would be formed under different leaderships. Even those who would divide on the saying "We are of Christ," did not escape rebuke. He made no exception in their favor. Possibly he saw their tendency to boast over others.

Our denominational existence has been defended in an illustration of an army, having its many divisions, yet all subject to one leader. But the application does not hold as to the present state of the Church. We think it would have suited the Church as Jesus and His Apostles left it;

but it does not picture the condition of the Church now. Except in a general adherence to Christ and the doctrine of salvation by Him, every denomination is "a law unto itself"; and each is, in many respects, antagonistic to others, independent of others, and the marked characteristics before the world are division, opposition, and too often unseemly contentions and jealousies. No army, presenting such a front to its enemies, could be successful in war. The several parts of an army may be separated in the occupation of different positions—even to the sentry on outpost duty; but every individual part of the army has and recognizes a positive and openly declared connection with the whole body. Each part acts in conjunction and harmony with every other part of the organization; and no part has any independent existence. So the Apostle teaches of the Church in Romans xii; 1 Corinthians xii. Is not that God's idea of His Church?

CHAPTER XVI.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

The findings hold—Parables: Vineyard; shepherd and fold; olive tree—Judaism: two meanings.

THE use of the word "churches" gave us some perplexity, as we said. If in crossing from one Dispensation to another, Old things passed away and the Church became first lost, then made anew; if the Church really died, then came—by a sort of resurrection—into a new form of life for us Gentiles, we could not think that some record of the great transformation would not be made. But nothing of the kind meets us. Therefore, we must hold to three things which came to us in previous studies:

I. The organization of the Visible Church in the tent of Abraham.

II. The oneness of the Church until the time of the Apostles.

III. The extension of the Church into the Gentile world, with all its privileges, and without any suggestion of change to occur then, or at any time afterwards.

The illustrations in the New Testament, which are presented in this chapter, not only confirm those findings as correct, but give additional doctrine, namely: The *sameness of the Church under both Dispensations.*

This is not a "distinction without a difference." In our use of the terms, "*oneness*" means the visible existence of the Church in form, as one body; but "*sameness*" refers to the constitution of the Church under the Old and New Dispensations. By its use, we mean that no new Church was formed; and that "our Church" is only the matured, reformed Church of the Old Testament. See our Chapter XIX.

We now present the several illustrations in point:

I. *Our Lord's parable of "The Vineyard," Matthew xxi.* (Refer to Luke xx.)

"Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their season. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

These words were an offense to "the chief priests and scribes"—the leaders in the Visible Church as it then existed. That such was their position, the records plainly indicate. By reference to our Chapter XXXII, the reader will see that this parable was spoken while the Old Dispensation was in force; though the records are called "New Testament" in our Bibles. Understanding this, the correctness of our assertions here will be better appreciated. The Visible Church had not been reformed at that time.

Our Lord was in the very midst of that work. And is it not clear that those men would not have been offended, nor challenged His authority, then sought to kill Him, and that they would not have called Him to account for the official act (Luke xx, 1, 2) of cleansing the temple *had they not regarded themselves as leaders in the Church*, and considered that He was intruding into their sphere of duty? The writers show that the point of the parable was for those men as officers in the Church. We read, Verses 45, 46: "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude because they took him for a prophet." In Luke xx, 19, we read: "And the chief priests and the Scribes, the same hour, sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people; for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them." (Matthew names Pharisees, who were always in league with Scribes against Jesus.) Again: Had not Jesus regarded them as occupying the position we claim for them, He would not have told the people, in Matthew xxiii, 2, 3: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat (were in his stead as spiritual leaders in Israel). All, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not." They could teach rightly, but lived wrongly. His parables were spoken publicly, where all could hear; and it was a bitter experience for those teachers of the people to hear themselves condemned in the presence of their own congregations.

We now analyze this parable as follows:

"The vineyard," prepared and rented to the "husbandmen," represented the Church which had been organized; put in working order, and then committed to the care of Israel. This we learn, not only from the history of the Church as thus far studied, but from certain expressions in this parable. Our Lord was addressing the people of Israel. He said: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

That was His application. The "vineyard," then, represented the kingdom of God. (Sometimes the term is applied to the preaching of the gospel, as in Acts xx, 25.) But what "kingdom of God" had been in Jewish keeping? It could only be the Visible Church. It was to "be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." When the Church was taken from Israel, to whom was it given but to the Gentiles? Therefore, none others are meant by the word "nation." There were none others to whom the kingdom of God could be given. The transfer of the "vineyard" pictures the transfer of the Church, which is still in Gentile keeping. Note well: There is no hint of destroying the "vineyard," or "kingdom of God." The only change is in the *occupants*. The "vineyard" remained the same. The same remarks apply to the "marriage supper," Matthew xxii. In each case that which had been prepared remained as it was; but one class of people forfeited the privileges, and others were called in to occupy the forfeited place. The transfer was in privileges lost by some; received by those who succeeded to their place. The truths illustrated, are:

1. God organized His Church, and put Israel in charge of it. They were cast out; that is, the Church was taken from them in their rejection by the great Reformer—Jesus. Then the Gentiles were called, and the Church was left to them. This is simple fact.

2. God sent His prophets; then sent Jesus to the Jews, first. As illustrated in the parable, they rejected His prophets, and killed His Son—Jesus. After these final rejections, by Israel, the gospel-call was sent to Gentiles who gladly responded to it.

3. The Church remained in its original form and constitution, as pictured in the unchanged "vineyard."

4. There was but one "vineyard"; or, one "kingdom of God." That one passed through the process of transfer to "other husbandmen"—Gentiles—without change in its form, or character.

II. *The Parable of the Good Shepherd, John x, 14–16.*

Jesus said: "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep and am known of mine. * * * And (standing in Israel) other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, (and) one shepherd."

He was in Israel, when so speaking; and still under the Old Dispensation. What, but the Church, could His "fold" have been? It was the place into which His "sheep" —His people—were gathered. Here is Old Testament figurative language, as in Psalms lxxix, 13; xcv, 7, and c, 3, God's people are called "the sheep of His pasture." As far as Verse 16, in the parable, Jesus spoke as then standing in His "fold" surrounded by His "sheep" which had been gathered into it. But He said "other sheep" were to be brought in by Him. He would call; and they would hear His voice; come into that fold, where He was then standing; and there should "be one fold and one Shepherd." We note:

1. He had the "fold" already built—the Church already organized; and was then standing within it.

2. He had some "sheep" already gathered about Him; the Church in Israel.

3. He was to call and bring in "other sheep"—the Gentiles—not then of the "fold."

4. No *new* "*fold*" was to be made, but *new* "*sheep*" were to be brought into the existing "fold."

Can the teaching be misunderstood or doubted?

III. *The Olive Tree Grafted, Romans xi, 13–25.*

This parable is from Paul, our heaven-sent teacher.

"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy:* and if the root *be* holy, so *are*

the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

In Verses 4, 5, Paul taught that the "remnant," which had always preserved the Church, still existed in Israel. He then taught as follows:

The Church in Israel was "the first fruit," and "root" of the tree which God had planted. It is called ἅγιος (hagios)—"holy," not because of personal holiness, but (according to Bible usage) as "set apart to God's service; dedicated; consecrated," as in 1 Corinthians vii, 14, etc.

Gentiles were "branches" from the "wild olive tree" grafted in where the fruitless branches (unbelieving Jews) had been cut off. In being thus grafted in, they partook of the "root and fatness of the olive tree," in common with the "remnant" in Israel, composed of those who had been faithful. As with the original "fruit—lump—root," so with those grafted in, all were called "(ἁγία—hagia) holy,"

alike; that is, "set apart; consecrated," as God's people. The word φυραμα (phurama—translated "lump") means "to mix by kneading; that which is mingled." Therefore we read: "If the (απαρχη—aparchê) firstling (i. e. Israel) was holy, (φυραμα—phurama) that which is mixed (or mingled; incorporated) with it (Gentiles, Ephesians ii, 11–22) is also holy." In Romans xi, 15, the casting away of Israel; or, Verse 12, the fall of them, is said to have brought salvation unto the Gentiles, Verse 11; and in Verse 12, "the riches of the Gentiles." So in the parable of the "Vineyard," already noticed. In Verse 5, the "remnant," called, "the election" in Verse 7, is distinct from the nation. As a *nation*, Israel was cast off, Verse 15; but "the election," the faithful ones in Israel, were retained as the Church of God.

So there stands the Old "tree-stock" upon which branches from "a wild olive tree" were grafted. Thus, Verses 17, 18: "If some of the branches (of the old tree) be broken off, and thou (Gentile) being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in among them (i. e. those remaining), and with them (συγκοινωνος—sugkoinōnos) a fellow-partaker of the root and fatness of the olive-tree (εγενου—egenou) becamest, boast not against the branches. But if thou boast (it is still true that) thou bearest not the (ῥιζα—rhiza) trunk of the tree, but the (ῥιζα—rhiza) trunk of the tree bears thee."

Let it be well noted that not a word is said, nor hint given about uprooting, or cutting down, or in any way changing the old tree-stock. Only some of its barren branches are pruned off; and these are replaced by grafts from the "wild olive-tree," or Gentile world. The tree-stock was left rooted in the earth as God had planted it, still bearing the good branches in Israel among which the graftings were intermixed. So the Church was made smaller, at first, by the reforming work of Jesus; then made larger by the ingathering of the Gentiles. There was no new tree-planting. The Church, in its first constitution, remained as God had made it. And observe: The

nature of the olive-tree was not changed by the ingrafting of other branches; but it just received and bore those new branches, along with the old branches still on the tree. All Israel did not reject the gospel. Therefore, Paul says here: "blindness in part is happened unto Israel." The fully blinded composed what is called "Judaism," which was never a part of our Lord's reformed Church. At first it meant the Visible Church, in contrast with heathenism. It had many false professors; but some were true, as Simeon, Anna, Nathaniel, and others like them, who held the faith and at once accepted Jesus as the Christ. But in the reformation, by Jesus, the "chaff" was rejected,—the false professors were condemned and cast out. Then "Judaism" degenerated into the formal, empty religion of the (απειθουντες—apeithountes) disobeying Jews. See Acts xiv, 1, 2. It finally became "a sect" opposing Christ. The Greek of Galatians i, 13, 14, represents Paul as once true to Judaism,—translated, "the Jew's religion." That was during the time of the first meaning of the word. After the reformation work was put into Apostolic hands, Judaism was fully developed in the second meaning of the word. It remained thus to the end; and is so now. But there were some "of the circumcision" whom Paul called "My fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God," Colossians iv, 10, 11. The real Church was culled out of, and separated from the original Judaism. After that it received believing Gentiles as fellow-Christians. On Paul's rejection of Jesus, see our Chapters XVIII and XXII.

CHAPTER XVII.

VISIBLE UNITY.

Leading doctrines of the New Testament—The Abrahamic society was visible—Synagogues and churches—Our Lord's prayer in John xvii, for visible oneness—The Church as the world sees it—Oneness of the Godhead visible—Christ condemned divisions—When they first appeared—Signs of the times—Is inquiry wrong?—Creeds and the Bible—Is change dangerous?—Societies—Division at the Lord's Table. Paul's fears—Names of churches—Illustrations of good in unity—Stepping on a shadow—Is there danger in unity?—Persecutions—Liberty in thought and action—Our Lord's idea as to the source of danger.

HAVING now, as we think, gained a definite satisfaction as to God's idea of the form in which His Visible Church should exist, this chapter becomes a necessity. We understand the Scriptures to teach a visible, practical oneness. Believing this, we take no account as to how it may be received by man. In the New Testament we note four doctrines:

I. The Church one in Christ, by faith.

II. A common saved condition, through union to Christ.

III. The Church one in Abraham, as "father of us all before God."

IV. A common visible organization, in which all are not necessarily saved, yet all are outwardly covenanted as one body from Abraham to the end of time.

None can doubt that the society organized in the household of Abraham was a visible one; and none think of divisions in that society. Yet divisions have come! Whence are they? We can find no suggestion of their origin with God. If there is a Bible warrant for them, it is hidden from our eyes. True, there is mention of "churches," as we have seen; but we also saw that they

were parts of the one great "body of Christ," as all the synagogues in Israel were but parts of the one Old Dispensation organization. No one thinks of denominations in Israel, because "synagogue" is found in the plural number. Our finding is: What synagogues were, in the Old Testament, "churches" were and are in the New Testament. They all united to form the one "body of Christ" in its visible form, and were and are all "members one of another."

Turning, now, to our Lord's prayer for the Church which He was about to leave on earth in the care of the Holy Spirit (John xiv; xvi), we see that (John xvii, 21–23) in revealing God's will He prayed three times, in as many verses, that His people might be one. And two sentences, Verses 21, 23, indicate oneness that could be seen by the world. His words are: "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me"; and "that the world may know that thou hast sent me." Do not these words call for a oneness that could be seen; and being seen, would influence? Spiritual oneness will not answer this demand. Experience teaches that the world walks by *sight*, not by faith. It believes and is affected by what it sees, or by what appeals to its senses. Upon this very principle Our Lord based His command to His people: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." So, too, He demands not mere confession, but confession "before men." Reason says that if the oneness for which He prayed is to affect the world in favor of His Divine claims, it must be visible. The world must see, in order to know and feel it. Such thoughts become of weight when the world sees the Church broken up into denominations; and not only so, but, too often, controversial as to "faith and manners." Here and there, especially of late, there has been a marked tendency to "union meetings." In these, enthusiastic professions of spiritual oneness are made. But—and who does not know it?—ere long, much of all is forgotten, apparently.

Each "mans his own fortress" again; the "guns are in position"; and the denominational battles rage as fiercely as ever. In thus seeing and hearing our disagreements, can the world know exactly what to think and believe? All may agree in preaching Christ, but do all agree as to the doctrines of Christ? Is it never seen that our divisions attract unfavorable attention?

But if oneness is Scriptural, when and where shall we begin for its attainment? Some suggestions are given in our first chapter. It must be through a reformation wrought by the Spirit of God! Our Lord's prayer was for cause and effect; the cause is to be in the visible oneness of His people, wrought by the workings of His Spirit (who has them in charge) in driving out all that is not of Christ; the effect resulting from that manifested oneness as the people of Christ's Spirit, is to be in the conviction of the world that He who can so influence men must be Divine. How could it be otherwise? If the Church were *seen* to be of one great real brotherhood in Christ, who can imagine what the effect would be upon the thought and faith of the world? Let us put three things together which cannot be without significance:

1. The Church was one, in its visible existence, from Abraham until the end of the work of the Apostles.

2. When the continuance of that oneness was threatened, before the end of that work—even in one city—the movers in the matter received a crushing rebuke, twice spoken, from an inspired Apostle; and that was the Apostle to whom our Lord gave the Church among the Gentiles in particular charge. Did he understand what was and is good for it?

3. In all the Word of God we have no warrant for the incoming of divisions, after the ministry of the Apostles should cease.

From such facts, alone, our impressions have come. For before these studies were undertaken we, in common with many others, firmly believed that our denominational

conditions were right in all respects. We are "converted" to opinions here expressed, by our own work in the pages of God's "unassisted" Word.

It has been suggested that events, occurring after Apostolic days, may be taken as indicative of God's will. But a question at once comes: Who is to decide, infallibly, when, how, and which of those events are to guide and govern? Can we accept a thing as right just because God permits it? That would be to say that much wrong is right for the Church, and for Christian duty. But we are accustomed to form judgment upon the standard of the Bible. What, then, if our divisions are not merely not approved, but are condemned by the Word of God?

In our Chapter XV, we showed that no human substitutes can be accepted—no additions; no subtractions—in seeking God's will; but that we are shut up by the law of Christ to the Scriptures as given by the Spirit. To allow liberty to one, is to make him dictator; a lord over God's heritage; or, the same freedom to choose for self must be accorded to all. Then will come the old cries: "I am of Paul"; "I am of Apollos," etc. There must be an utter exclusion of all human ruling; then another utter exclusion of all sources of information, save one—the Word of God as contained in the Scriptures. Should the Church become willing to abide by that, the matter will be self-arranging. The teachers of the Church must cease from favorite formulated systems of Church polity and theology, and sit humbly at the feet of the Holy Spirit, accepting what He actually teaches without the interference of partisan interpretations. Is it impossible? Cannot He guide into all truth? Did not our Lord give Him to us for just that? But one will say: "Men will not see alike." And there is the trouble to be rid of. Men must not insist upon their own seeing. Let them "be filled with the Spirit." No one is to seek God's Word for the purpose of establishing what he wants to believe; but to find the "mind of the Spirit." *It is there, or the Bible is a worthless Book!*

Why can we not see so as to become one? Our Lord's prayer was for us, as for the disciples then with Him. Look and see! He prayed for all those, throughout the ages, who would believe on Him "through their word." Does not that embrace us, if we have thus believed? We emphasize the assertion that He prayed for visible oneness—something that can be seen by the world, and which, being seen, will be a witness to His Divine claims. It is to be an education to the world into conviction in favor of Christ. The oneness of the Godhead, mentioned in that prayer, is generally considered as invisible. But there was a manifestation of it in the days of Jesus equivalent to a sight of it. He, being on earth, was seen. The Holy Spirit (in symbol) was seen descending upon Him; and God, the Father, was so nearly seen as to be heard speaking from heaven. These were not manifested as one person; nor as only spiritually and invisibly one. The three persons acted separate parts. Each was distinct from the other; yet, in the eyes of the people present, they worked together as one, for a common purpose and moved by a common impulse, having no clash of interests. The Church cannot, and is not expected to be one person or one local congregation; but its unity can be real and visible as with the members of the human body— each having a separate and distinct locality, yet each of the one indivisible body in which are no diverse interests nor discord of purposes. Were it possible for the different persons of the Godhead to have conflicting interests, we may try to imagine what chaos would be wrought as each strove to outgeneral and get ahead of the other. Then division would be weakness and ruin. Now, why think it can be strength to the Church? In Matthew xii, 25, Jesus taught that weakness results from division; but the world has discovered that truth, apart from Divine revelation. When men wish to succeed in a common interest, they band and work together. When they wish to gain in any struggle, they try to derange and scatter the opposing forces, whether in war or politics. Why does not the

universal principle—strength and success in union—apply to the Church as elsewhere?

But whence are our divisions? As we read, they appeared only after the signs and wonders of immediate Divine presence were withdrawn. Then came the renewed strivings represented in the question "Who shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Thought went astray from the Word of God; and men began to "lord it" over God's heritage. It is not for us, in these studies, to follow the crooked paths of the human productions called "church histories." We can only cry out against disastrous results, as seen in the mutilations of "the body of Christ." So long have these been accepted as natural and right, that the healing and restoration to original symmetry and beauty can come only after the heart of the Church has been broken and made anew. Commotions and strong experiences; feelings crucified, and self forgotten; preferences abandoned and prejudices crushed out—all must first be. The consummation will be exceedingly difficult. It is in the wishes and prayers of some; perhaps not desired by others, who are as true to Christ; and by many it is thought not only unwise, but impossible. A great horde of obstacles, and, even much active opposition may bar the way, yet, if it be the will of God, His people, "made willing in the day of His power," will bring about this reformation also. Through them, under the baptism with the Holy Spirit, He has wrought wonders ere now, and can repeat His works when He may choose. Our Lord's prayer can be answered, and will be if there is a "fullness of time" for it as there was for Him. But, as intimated, the Spirit of God will have to change the heart of all the Church. There is no other hope! And has a change begun to manifest itself, even now? We are by no means sure that such is not the case. In the signs of the times is evidence of a growing restiveness. The ecclesiastical sphere is not quiet. The hearts of all God's people are not satisfied with what is; and all this is becoming more pronounced and aggressive

as the years go by. Can it be interpreted? Does it mean, can it be, a yearning for this very thing of which we write? A movement there is, as "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees" (2 Samuel v, 24), as if God's time is near. The churches are showing disposition for a closer alliance and fellowship; and a new life seems in its birth throes. There is also a disposition to test the "creeds," of what sort they are; and a reaching out, as if to grasp material of one sort which all can use in building upon the "one foundation." Can this be condemned? Who shall say it does not mean the answer to our Lord's prayer; and that it is not the work of God's Spirit? We cannot believe that all overtures, inquiries, and suggestions looking to change are wrong; nor that God's people—trained so long to different speech—may not seek some way by which each can pronounce the "one Name" alike; or find some new arrangement of the chords, so that every heart, touched by the love of Jesus, can beat in common and responsive harmony to the music of the one song which praises the "name that is above every name."

What is truth? Some formulæ and creeds we have been accustomed to hold as more venerable than the centuries through which they have come to us. We cherish them because of their origin with the great and good—their age and holy associations. Do we ever ask: Are they as Holy Writ? Are they infallible by inspiration of God? Some inclination there may be to put them upon a level with the Word; for "Does not our church teach them? and would it so teach were these things not of God?" We have accepted them as "orthodox" in our "household of faith"; and must therefore regard others as wrong in so far as they do not believe as we do. Yet, each system is but the human effort—granted to be honest—to state for others what should be believed. Among them all we may have bowed down to our choice as before a "Thus saith the Lord." But the worshipers have different shrines. The "oracles"—the teachers of the Church—do not all

speak the same thing in representations of God's will. So are we taught to pronounce the "one Name" as those who speak in differing idioms; and are made to see diverse teachings in the one Book to which all give allegiance. Can it, therefore, be wrong or perilous to truth if we "try the spirits whether they are of God"? and can it be right to anathematize any effort to know the truth? The ceasing "from man, whose breath is in his nostrils," the ignoring of any (almost claimed) godlike authority, may not be wholly popular in the "churches." But are we of them, or of the Church? We love our "shibboleths," and "sibboleths" for their reverend age, their "gray hairs," and submission to their rule is as "second nature." Therefore, revision may not be as a welcome thought. And some are thus clinging to the past by the cry "Change is dangerous." May not conservatism become too conservative, even fossilized?

If we have understood God's Word, time was when change was dangerous. Paul preached against it to the Church at Corinth, when he resisted those who sought to divide "the body of Christ." Because of such preaching, the Apostles left the Church dwelling in the visible unity of one body, so far as the inspired records speak. Afterwards, as we must believe, their teachings were ignored, misinterpreted, or forgotten. Then the old Corinthian cry was renewed, but there was no Paul to stand in the breach and declare with authority, that "the body of Christ" must not be divided. Therefore, human leaders gathered their adherents, each as he would, and divisions—"*κατα ανθρωπον*—kata anthrōpon"—were born to live until the Church realizes that change, *from man to God*, is not dangerous! Yea, to live until we learn that it is not dangerous to demand, inexorably, that human "oracles" shall speak the revealed and actual will of God, or not be heard nor heeded! No change can be dangerous which gathers God's people, by the truth of God, away from selfishness; nearer to one another in the bonds of Christ; and which allies them,

more visibly, as the members of the "one body," obedient to the one Head—Christ—in all things. If in itself, change is dangerous, then let no sinner henceforth change from sin to holiness! Possibly we may feel that change is dangerous to our sectarian preferences, or to some cherished opinions. The Spirit caused to be written: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." With those words before us, can we say that we do so know we are right as to need no assurance from inquiry?

When Messiah's time was near, the scattered hosts of Israel sought Jerusalem. Perchance what is often called "The Spiritual Israel" has some premonition which is not fully understood, yet which is felt in its operating power. It may not be recognized as of God; and yet it may be inclining and moving towards great ends. What do the signs of the times mean? To what tend the introduction and growth of the Union Societies; The Young Men's Christian Associations; the "Christian Endeavor" leagues, and other organizations of the kind? They are filling the world! They are agitating the Church! In some cases, they refuse to be denominational; yet their members cling to the churches of their preference. Criticisms have assailed them, yet they persist, live and grow! Some are wondering if, at last, the heart of the Church is beating towards a visible oneness; and if the bonds are being wrought which will bind the Church into one—the world-convincing condition for which our Lord prayed? Should that come, would not the Church be once more as He saw it following Him from Mamre to Bethlehem; from Bethlehem to Calvary, and from Calvary to the end of Apostolic ministry?

But neither in these societies, nor elsewhere are the Lord's followers as they were of old. When He paused in His progress to the cross, to institute the great sign of fellowship; to recast the Old Dispensation token of oneness in Israel—the Passover—and give it a new form and significance as the memorial of His atonement for all His people, without distinction and to the end of Time, not one of

those, from whom we profess to have learned our faith and manners, thought of withdrawing from the fellowship-act; nor did our Lord make excluding conditions for any of them. They were His followers! Under the eye of the one Lord, they all sat together in the unity of one faith, as one body having one thought and feeling at the first and one Lord's Supper. For there was and is but one. Is it so now? Nay; but even at that "Holy of Holies" in the Visible Church, denominational views separate the followers of the "one Lord"; and, even there, the fires of controversy are kindled! It is claimed—and let it be granted—that convictions are honest and consciences are clear. Yet there is a question due: Where and how were convictions received, and consciences educated? Doubtless all will answer: From the Word of God. What then? Is God's Word divided, so as to furnish a lawful reason for separation to each of these divisionists? Were our variances learned there? Let the answer be candidly true. Is it impossible that we so learned, first, of men—so that our creed is "kata anthrōpon"—then, that we sought supporting texts in the Bible? Paul's fear was that Christ's headship might be forgotten in consecration to a sect. Devotion to a Pauline, or a Cephasine sect might run to extremes for the destruction of fellowship in the "one body." It is not difficult to imagine the process, as some would contend for what they thought was Paul's doctrine; and others would insist upon a chosen interpretation of what Cephas had said. So clash would come and increase in violence until, so to speak, they would soon be at each other's throats. But, in such a case, we must believe that the controversionalists would be misrepresenting their teachers, or that they had gone astray from following them; for Paul and Peter (Cephas) were ministers of the "one Lord," the "one faith," and were inspired by the same "one baptism" to preach the one gospel. See where the trouble would extend; Rome would soon be infected; then Colosse, and so on until the whole Church would degenerate into a lot of contentious "churches."

As before intimated, we understand the terms "church at Corinth, church at Rome, churches of Galatia," etc., to be the titles of the local parts of the one "body of Christ." Or, in accord with our Apostle's illustration, the local churches were branches of the one "Tree" of God's first planting. They were the growth of and on that tree. It had grown for centuries in the land of Israel; then it was "pruned" and transplanted among "the Gentiles." As new branches grew upon it, they united in the service of sustaining and nourishing the tree. The Apostles ministered to the tree after its care was committed to them, by grafting new branches upon the old "stock" in the stead of those which the Reformer—Jesus—had pruned away because of unfruitfulness. There, all grew together in the visible oneness of one tree, each filling its own place without hindrance to others; and the tree-stock also grew and was increased in strength as its roots and branches multiplied. From the several roots the life-sap flowed to all the branches alike, through the one tree-stock, nourishing all into larger and stronger growth. And because all the branches were borne by the one tree-stock, our Apostle warned them that none should boast against others; for not one branch had an independent life of its own; and if one was severed from the oneness of the parent tree, it would perish. But should any branch boast of having separate, independent existence, do we not see that it would still be a part of the tree, notwithstanding?

We cannot find that Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, knew any other doctrine in the days of the Apostles. We repeat, therefore, that this is the idea of God about His Church. It seems very plainly so, if we confine ourselves to the records of His Word; but he will not so see who trusts himself to study by any other light. We once read of a man who fell into the water when attempting to pass from a vessel to the shore. He mistook a shadow for a part of the gangway plank. His error was not in his intention, but in not looking more carefully to his footing.

So to speak, he acted upon a hasty conclusion that he was going rightly. Such a history may repeat itself in our spiritual sphere. Certainly no one can be harmed by a re-examination of the grounds upon which he is placing his ecclesiastical feet. We have known people who refused all such suggestions, and could never be prevailed upon to hear a word from "the other side." To take such a position is, to say the least, not the part of wisdom. We must now speak of the supposed dangers in visible oneness.

When we "remember the days of old," and consider the safe-keeping of God over His Church, the dangers should not make us afraid. Is not Jehovah in His "holy temple" now as in the former days?

All fears may be summed up in a sentence: "As one, the Church would be overbearing and persecuting as was Rome in power. There was visible oneness, and it begat error and other troubles." (The Romish Church should never—as is so commonly done—be called "Catholic." This word means "universal," and applies to the whole Church of God, everywhere.)

Possibly any denomination, gaining unlimited power and uniting with "temporalities," would be dangerous. Therefore some think that safety is assured in the curbing influences of denominations. But may not circumstances put some one denomination into power? That is the very drift of the strife. Consciously, none may be striving for ascendency; yet is not each doing what it can to forge ahead of others? Will that be condemned? If we believe that we hold God's very truth, is it not our duty to win others to our way, if we can? Now, as each denomination is sure that it has the truth, it feels bound to do what it may for the conversion of the world to its faith and manners; and not seldom there is effort towards "proselyting"—more truly, ecclesiastical sheep-stealing. Let the winning work go on to such success that any one denomination becomes what Rome was, in her palmiest days; and would it still have charity for others? Human nature has some very

unreliable qualities. Rome only used the means within reach, for growing greater than others. Succeeding, she thought others should submit to her dictation. Naturally, having power, where argument failed, force was resorted to. And in all, what was Rome but "a denomination" (heretical, if you choose), in power? It was a successful "sect." But, in all the time, from Abraham to the last of the Apostles, when did the Church persecute? What was there to be persecuted? There were no diverse interests; no opposing elements in the one Church; and, certainly, the Church did not persecute the world! The only persecutions known were waged against the Church. At first, Judaism drove the Church out of Israel; then, temporal powers warred against it. But the Church did not persecute. Indeed, our Lord's teachings forbade any such thing. When we talk of Rome's persecutions, the subject is: "The works of human nature in ecclesiastical clothes." Put the same garments upon any other sect, or denomination, and like results will follow, and "Rome" can be spelled with more and different letters. A denomination or sect may be in power. The Church cannot be so. The "sect" is of human nature. The Church is of God, and is ruled by the Spirit of Christ. When the Church stood nearest to Christ, who feared that it would harm others because it was one? Though not so great in numbers as now, the same power was in it as now—the power of a Divine life upheld by the omnipotence of Jehovah. There is the power of the Church, and only there! Against all human contentions, the Head of the Church decreed the law of peace, so that not a solitary individual going contrary to the whole Church, should be persecuted or denied perfect liberty of thought and action; see Matthew xviii, 17. The law was to hold good even in the case of a heretic, Titus iii, 10. The one limitation is, that the rebellious one must not be *continued in church membership.* Upon this principle all societies act, and are approved in their rule. Out of the Church, a man may do as he chooses, and the Church has no power over

him. It is not possible, then, for oneness of the Church to interfere with freedom of thought and action. If there is any danger at all, in connection with the Church, it lurks in its denominational existence.

While we defend our sect-lines by arguings of danger in visible oneness, the world is losing that for which our Lord prayed—the witness of His visibly united people—and all the powers of sin are massing their forces for more successful assault upon our broken ranks and deranged organization.

CHAPTER XVIII.

REFORMATION CHANGES.

Divine manner and purpose in changes—Rejection of the Jews—The remnant—Explanation of circumstances—Ignorant acts. Isaiah's prophecy, Isaiah xxix—Saul of Tarsus—Why more Jews did not believe—Obstinacy of impressions—Why "Jesus" was rejected—Meaning of Matthew ii, 23—Unjust proceedings of the Sanhedrim—Reception of the Gentiles—The Church was not disbanded—Distinctions abolished—New "token"—Sent to the Gentiles only—What, now, of a believing Jew? Changes from Mosaism.

THE writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, uses the word "reformation," in speaking of the time when Christ would come. The results of His coming were:

I. A purifying of the Church in Israel.

II. The opening of the Church to the Gentile world, after the work of reformation in Israel had been fully inaugurated, Hebrews ix, 10.

Though the forerunner of the Christ—called "John the Baptist"—did not use this word, he employed others of like meaning, thus showing that he regarded the mission of Jesus as of the kind so indicated. In Matthew iii, he taught that the fruitless tree would be cut down and burned. Of the great Reformer he said: "Whose (πτυον—ptuon) winnowing-shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Also Luke iii, 9–17. This gives some idea of the character of His work. It was to be searching and thorough, and its results were to be as complete as the purifyings of the hottest fires. Here was one part of the double baptism, "with the Holy Spirit and with fire." His "floor"—the Church—was to be purged of worthless members; but the faithful ones were to be retained, as wheat gathered into the garner. There should be no surprise in finding that,

in this reformation, as in every other, there was a passing away of some old things and a bringing in of others new. We have referred to the double baptism—one part, with the Holy Spirit; the other, with fire. The first was to revive the Church; the second was to cleanse out all the "chaff"—the formalism of a nominal, dead membership. That which was intended to be temporary, also, was to be taken away; and some old things were to be transformed, and applied to new use. So much having the appearance of radical change is seen, as almost to suggest the utter disbanding of the old Church and the creation of a new one. Our study must, therefore, be both careful and unprejudiced. We note:

I. The rejection of the (*απειθουντες*—apeithountes) contumacious, disobeying Jews. By the severe reforming work—called the baptism with fire—they were expelled from the Church. In Acts i, 5, we see that the disciples were to receive only the baptism with the Holy Spirit, of which Joel had prophesied. The Jews, as a nation, were cast off; but within the nation was the "remnant" which preserved the Church. Paul—quoting Isaiah i, 9,—speaks of this, in the words: "Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha." Thus we have an idea of how extensive and searching was that winnowing work. As representatives of the "remnant," we see Joseph, Mary, Anna, Simeon, John the Baptist and his parents, and there were many others whose acceptance of Jesus as the Christ for a long time curbed the machinations of their false teachers who wished to destroy Him in order to silence His rebukes of their hypocrisy. Such as they were not cast out. They loved the service of God, and rejoiced in His Christ, Luke i, 10; ii, 25. True, in many passages all the people present before Jesus seem to have shared in His condemnations; but a study of the records proves that He was addressing mixed audiences—some believing, some full of unbelief and mocking. Therefore,

at one moment everything seemed in favor of Jesus,—that is, when believers were speaking, or were spoken to by Him; but in the next moment all seemed against Him, when unbelievers spoke or were spoken to by Him; see John vii, 40–44. Examine John vi, 28, 29, with 30–33, and 34, 35, with 36; then a general teaching in 37–40; but cavils, and the answer of Jesus in 41–51; and so on to the end of the chapter. Individuals of the crowd would be continually asking questions—some for good purposes, others for evil—and Jesus would answer each in his turn, while teaching all. It was somewhat the experience of a modern "stump speaker."

If we grant that the majority of the Jews rejected Jesus, it is still true that a great number did accept Him as the Christ. Many who rejected "Jesus of Nazareth" had no thought of rejecting the Christ of God. Most fervently they believed in the Christ, and awaited His coming with a longing inexpressible. Hosts of these were afterwards reclaimed. Our Lord understood it all; therefore His prayer for them, on the cross. In his Chapter xxix, Isaiah prophesied of the hypocrisy of the Jews, but also of the salvation of the godly among them. His words are: "Therefore thus saith Jehovah who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." These latter words were strikingly fulfilled in the case of those "who erred in spirit," and of those who "murmured" against Jesus as the Christ, because He hailed from Nazareth, instead of Bethlehem according to the prophecies. They learned "doctrine" afterwards. See Acts vi, 7. As we study those people, the dying prayer of Jesus assumes a new significance in our thoughts. He knew that many only "erred

in spirit," and He would have them "come to understanding." As an example, we present the case of Saul of Tarsus, for it is the most prominent, though we do not learn that he ever saw Jesus until after the ascension. This study has changed views formerly held as to this man, and we now believe that we greatly misunderstood him.

The records show very positively that he was never a knowing and willful rejecter of Christ. In 1 Timothy i, 12, 13, he says of his persecuting work: "I did it ignorantly in unbelief." It was a sin of ignorance, and he was guilty only so far as the Greek word *αγνοεω* (agnoeō) expresses the conduct of one who sins through ignorance, misunderstanding, etc. He said it! Was he writing a lie in God's Book? Would the Holy Spirit have inspired or allowed him to make that excuse had it not been good and true? There is no shadow of evidence that he ever saw or knew Jesus during or before the persecutions of which he, so pathetically, confesses himself to have been guilty. He was under the spell of current Rabbinical teachings and prejudice against "Jesus of Nazareth." See his defense before Agrippa, in Acts xxvi. Read his words attentively; they show, most emphatically, that he had *not understood*, therefore did not believe in "Jesus of Nazareth" as the Christ until enlightened by the heavenly vision. Said he: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to"—what, or whom? The Christ? No; never! But "contrary *to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.*" There was his trouble; "the *name*" under which Jesus appeared. "Jesus of Nazareth? Why, the Christ was prophesied of as coming from Bethlehem of Judea. But this claimant hails from the disreputable city of Nazareth, in Galilee! Of course, then, He is an impostor, as His very name proves." Do we not see how the "ignorance" wrought his "unbelief"? (Jesus—*Ιησους*, Iêsous—was the Greek form of the Hebrew יְהוֹשֻׁעַ Yẹhoshua, Joshua,—a very common name in Israel.) And see how promptly

he accepted Jesus as the Christ when his misunderstanding was dissipated! He had no "unbelief" toward the *Christ;* but only toward "Jesus of Nazareth." He had not understood that Jesus was the Christ. Read the interview between him and the ascended Lord, in Acts ix. Was he then accused of rejecting or opposing the Christ? Not in one word nor hint! But the Lord said: "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." It is on record that even John the Baptist would not have known who Jesus was, but for the special revelation given to him; see John i, 31–33. Many others believed as soon as they were made to "learn doctrine," and come to "understanding." So of the "great company of priests," Acts vi, 7. It is natural to ask: Why did not all these become convinced while Jesus and His works were before them? Several reasons are at hand:

(1). The hardest of all things is to unteach what has been wrongly taught. Do not all teachers know it to be so? This applies with special force to error. Jewish minds were filled—most of them from infancy—with erroneous ideas about the expected Christ. The people did as most people do now. They assumed, naturally enough, that their spiritual leaders—the Scribes and Pharisees and "elders"—understood the Scriptures which they taught, and that they taught rightly. Hearing them, the people had learned to expect that the Christ would be known—for one thing—by coming from Bethlehem of Judea; also that He would come as a great Prince—in pomp and power to free them from the hated Roman bondage. When such ideas had been inculcated, all the time and by all the teachers, with few exceptions, it was wellnigh impossible for those so trained to believe otherwise. See the disciples of Jesus, out of whom even He seemed unable to drive the wrong notions they had about His mission. Read Matthew xx, 20, in which is the petition of some of them for places of honor in the expected setting up of His kingdom. See also Matthew xvi, 21–23; Mark x, 31, 32; Luke ix, 44–46.

Even His forerunner, when in prison—John the Baptist, who had witnessed to and baptized Him—almost lost faith in Him as the Christ; for He was not fulfilling the common expectations; Matthew xi, 2, 3.

His disciples were still of the Old Testament faith—looking for salvation through the ordained sacrifices pointing to Christ's atonement—yet they did not understand Him until after His resurrection; nor then, until the baptism with the Holy Spirit. To the last moment they were asking: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts i, 6. And in John vii, 1–5, we read that His own "brethren" did not believe on Him, and it is seen that they were disposed to sneer at His pretensions, though from Acts i, 14, we learn that they were afterwards among His disciples. Nothing short of the baptism-miracle sufficed to bring His own disciples to a right understanding. How much more difficult it must have been for those to believe, who had not their advantage of personal and daily association with Jesus!

(2). Another difficulty, in the way of the people, was the history of Jesus. He was born in Bethlehem of Judea. In Matthew ii we read of Herod's attempt to destroy Him. Now, anyone ignorant of the revelation made to Joseph and Mary, and their consequent action, Verses 13–15—as doubtless all the people were—would easily think that Herod had killed Jesus, Verse 16. Thus, even if His birth was noted among the people, He would soon pass out of their minds, or only be remembered as one of Herod's victims. This would more surely be so when, instead of returning to Judea and making it known that Jesus was still living, Joseph and Mary went to Nazareth and remained there, Verses 19–23. Thus Jesus was no more heard of, so far as we can learn, as the child who was born at Bethlehem. When the attention of Israel was finally attracted to Him, He was known as "Jesus of Nazareth" only. (It is certain that the circumcision recorded in Luke ii took place before Herod's attempt to kill Jesus; and Luke omits to record a

further residence in Bethlehem, as also the flight into Egypt. As Nazareth was the home of Joseph and Mary, that is mentioned as the place to which they finally went. Luke does not contradict, but only omits the details given by Matthew.) We see Jesus at Jerusalem when he was aged twelve years, but who had a thought that the Nazarine lad was the once babe of Bethlehem? Therefore, the debates on record, in John vii, 40–53, and elsewhere. Many were so impressed that they said: "Of a truth, this is the Prophet,"—that is, the Christ of whom Moses wrote under that title. Others—the theologians of the day—were coolly critical, and asked: "Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scriptures said that the Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem?" Again, challenging investigation, they said: "Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." So when Christ appeared as "Jesus of Nazareth" He was regarded as an impostor by those students of prophecy; and they crushed out much faith by—and with apparently good reason—putting the Scriptures against Him. They had a plausible and strong argument which the uninformed people did not know how to answer. It is evident that many of the faithful ones must have felt as Nathaniel did, when he asked: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" That town had a bad reputation among the Jews; and who could expect that, contrary to the Scriptures too, the glorious Messiah would come from such a place? The very wonders of Jesus, in word and deed, made Him appear all the more dangerous as an impostor in the eyes of those old prophecy students. In Matthew xxvii, 62, 63, they called him a "deceiver." We should not overlook the fact that none were forbidden to preach the Christ. All prohibitions were against preaching "Jesus of Nazareth" as the Christ. There was to be no teaching "in the name of Jesus," Acts iv, 18.

In Matthew ii, 23 (see the Greek), we read: "And having come he (Joseph) dwelt in a city called Nazareth,

so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets; he shall be called a Nazarine." We neither find nor hear of any such prophecy. We interpret the verse as follows: Make a full stop after the word "prophets." Take the succeeding words ("He shall be called a Nazarine,") as an independent and explanatory sentence, telling us that Joseph arranged to have Jesus called a Nazarine; hiding Him under that title in order that His enemies might not know Him, and that He might be spared to have the prophecies fulfilled in Him. Or, we may regard it as God's arrangement—Joseph being the instrument by whom it was carried out; for in Verse 22 we are told that Joseph was guided to the course he took. So then, because Jesus was called "a Nazarine" He was not only safe from Roman jealousy against "the king of the Jews," but He was rejected by many of His own countrymen. It must be that if any such prophecy existed some of His friends would have heard of it, and it would have been used in His favor.

Paul says, Acts xiii, 27, that the people of Jerusalem and their rulers, "(αγνωεσαντες—agnōesantes) not having understanding" of Jesus, and the voices of the prophets "which are read every Sabbath day, fulfilled them in condemning him."

(3). A strong party did oppose Jesus through real jealousy and hatred, because He exposed their sins and hypocritical formalisms. But had they realized that He was the Christ of God, we doubt if they would have dared to act as they did. The movement against Him was urged by the leaders of the people; and the process was successful through their schemings and misrepresentations. The multitude is not always thoughtful and independent. Demagogues often mislead the best men. It is also true that, for reasons which we cannot fully explain, Jesus gave His enemies an advantage, by forbidding His disciples and others to publish Him and His works to the people. No doubt He would have faith to rest upon the evidence of His works given to those who saw, and upon whom He wrought

them, rather than upon the persuasions and arguments of His adherents; see John v, 36; x, 37, 38.

But we find many records proving that He had such great popularity with the people, that the rulers were often afraid to molest Him in their presence. And when the Sanhedrim would arrest Him, they dared not do it openly, nor by law; but every step was in secret and in flagrant violation of their own national code. For example: The arrest was made secretly and at night; the sessions of their court were held at night and in a private house; the prisoner was required to criminate himself, and reports ("hearsay evidence") were taken as positive proof of guilt; and all this in utter violation of law. Then, when they brought Him before Pilate, instead of presenting the charges upon which they had found sentence among themselves, they changed the indictment to treason and sedition against the Roman government. By this last device they made it impossible that the people should interfere without arraying themselves against Roman rule. After the sentence was passed in the Roman court—it having been extorted from Pilate by threats of reporting him to the home government—the execution was to be under the Roman law, by Roman power, upheld by Roman soldiers; and so the people were shut out and made helpless. Had they desired to rescue Jesus, those proceedings rendered it impossible. The people were asleep when the arrest was made, and while the trial, before the Sanhedrim, was in progress. When they awoke their "hands were tied," even if they had wished to interfere. A study of Jewish laws, in connection with such passages as Matthew xxvi, and xxvii; Mark xiv, xv; Luke xxii, xxiii; John xviii, xix, will justify these remarks. Some of the records represent the crucifixion as a popular move, at the last; but the power of the persecuting leaders to "create a diversion," and gather a noisy following should be considered.

In view of these things, it may be that we should feel more charitably, than is our wont, towards the people

themselves. We are sure that if we could put ourselves in their place, we would see much with different eyes and thoughts. The claims of Jesus have now been so fully established that, as we suppose, the sin of that time cannot be repeated. Moreover, the special kind of evidence which opened Jewish eyes, is no more to be had. The personal witnessing of the Apostles was of great influence; and the time of it may be regarded as the final hour of Jewish probation. "The time of the reformation" did not extend beyond Apostolic ministry, nor the existence of the Jewish nation. Finally God cast off the Jews and scattered them in all the earth. Therefore, the preaching of the gospel, "to the Jew first," is no more a command.

II. The reception of the Gentiles, was a marked result of "the time of the reformation." It is the more striking in contrast with the rejection of so many Jews. But, as we have seen, there was no new Church made for those Gentiles. (See our Chapters IV and V.) They were received into the existing Church, and made "fellow-heirs" with the believing Jews already composing it. By a review of the above-named chapters and our Chapter XVI, the true state of affairs will be better realized. The incoming of Gentiles was church-extension, which can never be confounded with church-destruction. No one thinks of a church as disbanded when new members are added, and its territory is enlarged. That is what was taking place at the time of which we write.

III. Individual station, sex, nativity, etc., were ignored in the reformation-work. But our Lord was not revealed as "Head over all things to the Church" until after His atoning work was finished and He had ascended to His throne. That was one of the "mysteries" (hidden things) of which Paul several times spoke. The good pleasure of God, concerning "the fullness of times," was just beginning to appear openly. Many restrictions, which were adapted to the Old and more narrow Dispensation, were removed. This was, that the work of gathering into one,

all things in Christ, might have free course. Writing under the New Dispensation, the Apostle teaches that certain former distinctions and limitations were to exist no longer. This was one of the most radical of the changes. Under the Old Dispensation (when God "preached the gospel unto Abraham," Galatians iii, 8), the "token" which was given with the covenant was applied to males, only. But when our Lord was finishing His personal part of the "reformation," He made no such limitation for the "token" of the New Dispensation. When He sent His gospel to "all nations" He sent (what is called) "baptism," to all without distinction of sex or condition. Compare Matthew xxviii, 19; Galatians iii, 27–29.

This change has caused much controversy among the modern "churches," though there seems to have been none in the Church of the New Testament. (Our study of the subject is in our Chapter XX.)

Just here we say:

(1.) No trouble will be found, when we fairly examine this change.

(2.) We ought to learn what to think by watching those to whom the new "token" was given, in their ministry in the reformed Church. If it is seen that they regarded the change as affecting the real state and constitution of the Church, that will be our guide; and thus, also, if we see that they did not so regard it.

We find, as yet, no clash of Dispensations. It will be seen that the circumcised Israelite still adhered to the law under which he had lived; and that he never regarded baptism as sent to his people even when accepting Jesus as the Christ. *Every command for baptizing with water, under the gospel, was given for "the nations"*—the Gentiles. We find no such command for the people already in covenant-relations with God. That Jews did not consider the command (for baptizing with water) as applying to them, is shown in their conduct. They never referred to baptism as a new rite intended for themselves. In the history

(Acts xv,)—which has full consideration elsewhere—it is seen that believing Jews wished believing Gentiles to be circumcised; but not a word did they speak about baptizing circumcised Jews. (See our Chapter XXXIII.) The case may be illustrated thus: Suppose that Jesus has been among us, reforming the Church confined to our own country. On the eve of leaving us, after finishing His work, He calls His preachers together and commissions them to carry His gospel to all other nations—which we are to suppose as still heathen. In giving His command He ordains a rite different in form from that hitherto practiced in the home Church. That rite He tells His preachers to apply to those whom they disciple to His religion, among the other nations. But He makes no reference to the Church in our land, and says nothing about applying that rite at home. Upon what authority could the rite be applied in the Church of our own country? It is *commanded specially for the heathen nations*, not for the Church in our nation. In such a case His preachers could understand in no other way, than that the rite always used at home was to continue; and that the new rite was to be carried to the other nations. This sets forth the character of the command for the rite of Christian baptism, in Matthew xxviii. Baptism was to accompany church-extension only. This is a fact, but it is generally overlooked.

In the course of these studies we have ascertained, and hope to demonstrate, what we did not know before, namely: That Jesus did not send the rite of Christian baptism to Israel. To have done so, as we find, would have produced a conflict of Dispensations. Read "The Great Commission" carefully. The command to baptize was, *exclusively, in connection with the work of discipling the "all nations" to whom the gospel had not been sent;* who had not the true knowledge of God, and among whom He had no Church, nor covenanted people. The rite was for two classes, (*a*) for the heathen; (*b*) for those not of Jewish descent, though living among Jews.

It is further evident, that giving the new rite to the heathen world could not change the form and constitution of the Church; for these cannot depend upon the outward form of an ordinance. But the subject is more fully studied in our Chapters XIX, XX.

If it be asked: What should be done, now, when a Jew accepts Christianity? our reply must be based upon inference. He should be baptized, for he has lost his covenant-place, by being ejected from it in God's own act. There is, now, nothing which makes him a Jew, in God's reckoning. A work of reformation does not continue forever, though its results may. During the time of that work in Israel, the people were recognized as being under the first token (circumcision), even when accepting Jesus as the Christ. But when, as a nation, they finally and fully rejected Him, then God abandoned them as a covenanted people. When Jesus first sent forth His disciples (Matthew x), He told them to avoid the Gentiles; and to go "rather to the (*απολωλοτα*—apolōlota) wandering sheep of the house of Israel." He also bade them to shake from their feet the dust of any place where they were not received, saying: "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, than for that city." Upon those principles the Apostles, afterwards, acted. See Luke xxiv, 47; Acts xiii, 46–51; xviii, 6; xxviii. The Jew's day of probation is ended!

IV. Another change was in the abolition of some things in the system of Moses. The types, sacrifices, etc., were not ordained for continuance in the reformed Church. When, in His atonement, Christ became "the end of the law, for righteousness, to everyone that believeth," the old ceremonial law-sacrifices, with their accompaniments, passed away, having lost their value forever, Romans x, 4. The law-covenant, given to Israel after leaving Egypt, was abolished (Hebrews viii), and the covenant of grace was put in its stead. But this change had no bearing so as to affect the constitution of the Church. Our Lord's work

was a fulfilling of law and prophecy. Sacrifices promised the atonement to be made by Him, and He fulfilled that promise. But there were certain other promises made to "the fathers," which were in neither law nor sacrifices. Those, as Paul says, Christ came "to confirm." They belonged to the constitution of the Church. When Christ sent His gospel to "all nations," He fulfilled those promises.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CONSTITUTION.

What the word denotes—Recapitulation—How the covenant came to Gentiles—Christ the connecting link—John and Jesus circumcised—Note on Leviticus xii—"Confirm," in Galatians iii and Romans xv—Constitution not changed—The covenant still in force—What shall we do?

THE word "constitution" embraces all contained in the organization of the Church—the laws and principles ordained of God for existence and government. As it is God's Church, man has nothing to do with it except to receive it from God as He made it, and to minister in it as God has arranged. None can think that God, after creating the Church, left the framing of its constitution and the direction of its life to the will and wisdom of man. It is therefore our duty to study in order that we may understand and conform to the will of the God of the Church.

We deem it best to recapitulate some of the teachings which have already come before us. It is also well to have them in view as we proceed here.

I. God called a man of faith—Abram—and changed his name to "Abraham"; separated him from native land and life-long associations, and sent him to dwell in a foreign country—Canaan—promising that land as the home of his descendants who were to be a great nation.

II. After making and closing that covenant for Canaan with "Abram" (Genesis xv), God made another and different covenant with this man under the name "Abraham" about fourteen years later (Genesis xvii), saying, as a reason for this covenant: "For a father of many nations (näthan) have I appointed thee."

III. At the time of this second transaction God gave special command to Abraham for personal, spiritual duty. No such demand is found in any preceding records.

IV. The covenant (näthan) constituted with "Abraham" was not only unlike that (kärath) cut with "Abram," but unlike any other on record. It also had what no other covenant had, a "token," to be applied to its human members, namely: "circumcision," which appears for the first time in the Bible in this connection. Abraham, the believer, was commanded to receive this "token" upon his own person, then to apply it to all male members of his household, including the infant of eight days. Thus we see that—after Abraham—personal faith was not a prerequisite for membership in this society, as its token was commanded for some who were not capable of exercising faith.

V. Abraham, in his faith (Romans iv, 10, 11), was constituted the representative head of this society; and as such he was expected to train those subject to him in the fear of Jehovah, Genesis xviii, 19.

VI. This society was to be perpetuated in the line of a chosen "seed," beginning with Isaac. All carnal or flesh-seed, beginning with Ishmael, were excluded in the after-existence of the society.

VII. In this covenant Abraham was constituted the "heir of the world," and "the father of us all before God," Romans iv, 16, 17. The covenant was for "all families of the earth," and "many (or all) nations."

VIII. The manner in which the benefits of this covenant were to reach the nations was to be through Jesus Christ, when He should come "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," He being the seed of Abraham. The "fathers" were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

IX. The infant, not being capable of faith, could be reckoned as a member of this covenant, and so as being entitled to its token only through representation in the believing head—his parent.

X. The parent was responsible for the reception of the token by his child; and the penalty of being "cut off from his people" as a covenant-breaker was to be inflicted upon the child who had not received the token.

XI. The covenant was to be carefully kept by Abraham and his seed after him in their generations. This involved the obligation to train the seed for God, in every generation.

XII. When this covenant was first proposed to Abraham, he had no legal seed. Isaac was not born. Therefore, the household of Abraham was used to organize the society. At the birth of Isaac the circle was narrowed, and the covenant was confirmed to him; then to Isaac's son, Jacob, as successor in the seed-line.

XIII. The token of this covenant was exclusively spiritual in significance; and it was perpetuated from Abraham to Jesus.

Why God selected this form of token out of all things within His choice, may be conjectured; but we are not informed by the records. These show that it was a symbol teaching the need of spiritual cleansing, Deuteronomy x, 16, etc. It is declared, as we have seen, to have been God's recognition of "the righteousness of the faith" in Abraham. Let us now see how this covenant descended to "all families of the earth."

Matthew's record begins with the words: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Thus the Holy Spirit gives His descent, as direct from Abraham. In Galatians iii, 16, He is declared to be, pre-eminently, "the seed" of Abraham; and in Verse 29, all who "are Christ's" are told: "Then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." See, also, Romans iv, 13.

In Galatians iii, 7–9, the "promise," so often referred to—"In thee shall all nations be blessed"—is called "the gospel" which was preached unto Abraham. "The promise" is then put in contrast with "the law," which is called in Verse 24, "a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ," that we may be Abraham's seed and heirs; see Verses 13, 14. All teachings show how intimately the promises made to Abraham, as explained in Romans iv and Galatians iii, are connected with our salvation through Christ; and the

Apostle declares our redemption through those promises. Therefore, there was not, and could not be in them, any connection with the covenant of Genesis xv, for the land of Canaan and circumcision had no relation to that covenant.

The first circumcision on record, in what is called, "The New Testament," is that of John the Baptist, Luke i, 59. The second is that of our Lord Jesus, Luke ii, 21. Both were circumcised at the covenant-age of eight days. This shows that the Abrahamic covenant was kept all the centuries through to that time, according to God's command, in Genesis xvii. All can see that such keeping of it could not have been to confirm any carnal promise to Israel; for neither Jesus nor John came to confirm or to take a portion in such a promise. They were circumcised as the seed of Abraham. Their parents were believers; and the infants were represented in them upon the principles of the covenant. These circumcisions were not obedience to the law of Moses. Moses circumcised his own son before he was commissioned to give law to Israel, Exodus iv. His law only accepted and continued the rite as it came from the covenant made with Abraham. It appears in the law, first, in Leviticus xii, where the mention of it is incidental. The law of Moses did not cause the parents of Jesus to have Him circumcised; but it called them to Jerusalem *after the circumcision*, for law-duties, namely: To make the offerings it prescribed for the mother's ceremonial purification; see Luke ii, 22–24. But the New Version of this passage may mislead in its use of the plural pronoun; thus, "When the days of *their* purification," etc. This does not mean mother and child; but refers to the mother, only. Read thus: "When the days, prescribed for the purification of women, were accomplished, they (Joseph and Mary) brought him to Jerusalem to present (that is, to make the law-offering) to the Lord." The word "him," in the common version, is not in the Greek, and should not be in the translation. They came to present *law-offerings*, not the child, to the Lord. By the law of Moses, in Leviticus xii, the mother

was shut out from the "sanctuary" forty-one days after the birth of a son; and eighty days after the birth of a daughter. So the circumcision of Jesus—in recognition that He was within God's covenant and belonged to God—had to take place thirty-three days before his mother could appear in the temple; and from birth to circumcision were eight days more, making the forty-one.

We now study the law under which Jesus was circumcised, in its bearing upon the Church in all ages. And again we turn to the Apostle whom the Lord commissioned specially for our instruction.

In Galatians iii, 17, he says that the covenant given to Abraham in Genesis xvii, "was (προκεκυρωμενην—prokekurōmenên) *confirmed beforehand*, of God in Christ"; then, that "the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after," could not disannul that covenant so as to make its promise of none effect. Therefore, that covenant must have been in force during all of the four hundred and thirty years, before the law was given. And as the Apostle teaches that the law, when it came in, neither abolished nor changed the covenant, of course it remained in force all during the time of the law. Thus it is seen that Israel lived from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to Christ under that covenant. As before shown, it is called "The covenant which (προκεκυρωμενην—prokekurōmenên) was confirmed beforehand of God in Christ." What do these latter words mean? Evidently that Christ confirmed, ratified, settled, that covenant, long before the law was given. See a like phrase in 2 Corinthians v, 19. "God was in Christ," as the covenant ratifier; for the Greek word, "προκυροω—prokuroō," which is translated, "confirmed," means "to sanction; to establish previously." Our Lord existed, though not in the flesh, before Abraham lived. He was the "I AM," John viii, 56–58. He said so!

In and by Him that covenant was made. He existed, as God, before His incarnation; see John i, 1–3; Colossians i, 16–18; Hebrews i, 2, etc.

We find the word "confirm" (as translated), again, in Romans xv, 8, where we read: "Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God (βεβαιωσαι—bebaiōsai) to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Here we have a different Greek word with a different meaning, though the translation in the common version is the same. The word (προκυροω—prokuroō) of Galatians iii, 17, means "to sanction; to establish previously." But the word (βεβαιοω—bebaioō) of Romans xv, 8, means "to make steadfast; cause to stand," and belongs to *after-work*, as fulfillment of what was promised. It is like the Hebrew word "qum," of which we spoke in our Chapter XI. In Galatians iii, 17, the idea is that Christ was the Maker of the covenant of Genesis xvii; but the idea in Romans xv, 8, is, that He came in the flesh for the purpose of causing the promises "before made," to be fulfilled, or executed. He came "(ὑπερ—huper) in behalf of" those promises which, as "God in Christ," He made; "that," as the next verse says, "the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." In sending the gospel to the Gentiles, He caused those covenant-promises to be fulfilled. Thus He was true to the covenant "before made."

When we remember that these passages were written to Gentiles, after the Church was opened for their reception, it is clear that this covenant was in force for the New Dispensation. If this is not true, why write to the Gentiles at all, about it? The giving of that covenant, and the causing of those promises to be fulfilled called the Gentiles to "glorify God for his mercy," and to "rejoice with his people," Romans xv, 8–10. In Verse 9, Christ is represented as saying: "For this cause will I confess to thee among the (εθνεσιν—ethnesin) nations, and sing unto thy name." He was to be glad in gathering His "other sheep" into His "fold," as He said He "must" do in John x, 16.

The new "token" of the covenant—baptism—was for all the world, without any limitation, as to sex, etc., Galatians iii, 28, 29. Privileges were enlarged, under the

gospel. And did not the first sermons point to this—teaching that the promises of the covenant were for those who were "afar off," as for those who were "nigh"? In Ephesians ii, the same terms are used in the teachings about the work of Christ, in bringing Jews and Gentiles together into the same "household of God." It must be plain, to even a dull mind, that those promises of the covenant could not apply and be fulfilled to the Gentiles if the covenant was not in force for them.

In all our search, we cannot find one indication that this covenant, in which was the constitution of the Church, was ever repealed, or changed. But we find everything to the contrary. The same is true as to every outlook for the future. There are no signs that God ever intended, or intends, that His Church is to have any other constitution than that which He announced to Abraham, in Genesis xvii. Our Lord—the Reformer—made no change in it, though He gave a new "token" for the "nations"; and His enlargement of privilege was rather an addition to than a taking from the constitution. It may be styled "an amendment." The Apostles changed nothing; for they had no authority to do so. They could only confirm what their Lord had said and done. Therefore, we see them repeating the old promises as being for all, whether Jews or Gentiles.

CHAPTER XX.

CHANGE OF TOKEN.

Two things to be noted—Circumcision "a token"—Not sent beyond Israel. Not for all "the seed"—Baptism, for whom?—Crispus—Propositions. About baptism—Who could baptize?—No change in Constitution. Stamp illustration—Conclusion reached—Answer to a cavil.

TWO propositions will be accepted by all:

I. If God changed the token of His covenant, He had perfect right to do so; for the Church is His own; and He had full authority to do so as God over all.

II. A mere change in the outward form of "token," or seal, cannot change a constitution or code of laws.

In Genesis xvii, 11, circumcision is called "a token of the covenant." Was it to be the only one? That it was not always to be an essential—that is, that some might be Abraham's seed without it, is seen in Romans iv, 11, in the words: "He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being uncircumcised, *that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised.*" It is evident, unless God changed His token, or gave some substitute for it, that it must have always remained the only "token of the covenant." Again: Should any change be made we would expect it to be so published as to be known; for God attached a penalty to the omission of the rite. Clearly, the Israelites of Apostolic times had never heard of any change of the token for themselves. As before said, their conduct shows this, even when accepting Jesus as the Christ. On the other hand, Gentiles never had circumcision sent to them. Of this the records leave no doubt. When the gospel called Gentiles to be fellow-heirs in "the commonwealth of Israel," our Lord sent baptism to them, Matthew xxviii, 19, 20. Circumcision was not even mentioned. What are we to

understand? The unavoidable conclusion, based on facts, is that baptism was to be, for the discipled Gentiles, just what circumcision was for covenanted Israel. Let it not be forgotten that our Lord's command was for church-extension. Already the Church was in Israel with circumcision as its token; but when it was opened to all nations, baptism was to go to them with the gospel as the token for all who were not of Israelitish lineage. Let not the reader become weary of the repetition of this explanation. It is not accidental, nor through carelessness. It is the "key" to a right understanding of our subject, and there are "locks" into which it cannot be fitted except by repeated applications. We may be accused of tautology; nevertheless, in a long experience of trying to "make people understand," we have found repetition so effective that we are willing to sacrifice to the good results some of the "graces," whether in writing or speaking. But we return to our studies:

Our Lord said: "Go * * * teach all nations." That sent the preachers into a new field. It is what we would call now "Foreign Missions." They were to seek those "other sheep" and bring them into the "one fold" of the "one Shepherd"; and "baptism," not circumcision, was to be the mark put upon those which were gathered in. That was not a change of token for Abraham's Israelitish seed, but it was the *substituted token for his Gentile seed.* Let the reader grasp that, as with both hands; then hold on to it. The sending of baptism to Gentiles was virtual prohibition of circumcision for them.

These facts are illustrated in the controversy at Antioch, which was settled at Jerusalem, Acts xv. But what of the baptism of Crispus, in 1 Corinthians i, 14? He is said to have been "a ruler of the synagogue," in Acts xviii, 8. That synagogue was at Corinth, the capital of the Roman province, Achaia, in Greece. It was a home of Gentiles. Crispus, as his name shows, was not a blood-Jew. Probably he was—if we may judge by his name—a Roman. Being a Gentile, he was within the scope of the command

for baptism. No doubt he had embraced the Jewish religion, and believed in the Christ to come. His baptism was upon his confession of Jesus as the Christ.

By reference to Rabbi Calisch's statement (our Chapter X) it will be seen that circumcision was not regarded by Jews "as a *sine qua non* of admission to the synagogue, or of salvation." As it was not an essential, Crispus could have held his position without it, in the foreign city; but we doubt if he could have done so in Judea where Jews were more strict. The law said the "stranger" (one not a Jew) must be circumcised if he would eat the Passover. Hence some liberty was allowed. No record shows that Crispus ever ate the Passover. He had accepted the religion of the Jews, and so was admitted to the synagogue; but that he was baptized when accepting Jesus as the Christ, argues that he was not circumcised. And why should he be? Neither he nor other Gentiles would care to eat the Passover which was the memorial of Jewish deliverence from Egyptian bondage—an event in which the race of Gentiles had no special concern. In Acts xviii, we see that the Jews opposed Paul at this city of Corinth (Verses 1–8), and that then he mingled with Gentiles only, among whom was Crispus. He (Verse 7) departed from the synagogue and held services in the house of Justus, near by; and it looks as if Crispus also separated from the synagogue when he believed.

We now present the following points:

I. As circumcision was not the actual covenant, but only its "token," neither its repeal nor the substitution of another token could affect the covenant itself. No change in the form of an outward seal, and no substitution of one seal for another, can change a government or its constitution.

II. A constitution, once framed and ratified by proper and sufficient authority, and without limitation as to continuance, cannot be changed nor repealed except by act of the same or equal authority.

III. When the covenant was sent to the Gentiles, if the new token—baptism—involved a change in the constitution of the Church, some intimation of that most important fact would have been given. We have no right to infer change, in so great a matter, without sufficient reason.

IV. The command to baptize believers among the Gentiles, when Christianized, has its parallel in the circumcision of the believer—Abraham—when the Visible Church was organized in his household. Unless the constitution of the Church was changed, the same law for organizing, where no Church had existed, would prevail.

V. If there is no record or intimation of change, in the application of the original principles, when or before the New Dispensation opened, it is just to conclude that the original constitution remained intact and in operation (though the Gentiles were given a new token), and the original principles were in force for Gentiles.

VI. If the original principles still held, for Gentiles, then the character of membership was the same under both Dispensations.

These propositions seem solid. What results follow their application in the Church under the New Dispensation?

For one thing: We cannot escape recognition of the same classes of members, and must give the new token—baptism—to them. For there is no reason, to the contrary, in the constitution of the Church; nor in the command sending the gospel and baptism to the Gentiles. It is only in the commission for carrying the gospel to the Gentiles, that the command to baptize appears, Matthew xxviii, 19, 20; Mark xvi, 15, 16. The record in Luke xxiv, 47, is but a statement that Jesus suffered and rose from the dead "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;" and that this was right. Baptism is not mentioned in that statement. Jesus was talking to Jews. The Pentecostal baptism fell among and upon Jews, and will be studied in the next chapter. As will be seen, it was not the rite of

baptism; nor was baptism with water ever commanded to go with the preaching of the gospel to Israel. The fact to be kept in view, let it be remembered, is this: *The rite of baptism was ordained only when the gospel was sent to the Gentiles; and was for them!* It was to be applied to the first believers among them, as Cornelius and others. God had no covenanted people among the Gentiles, therefore the extension of the Church had to begin with those who believed, as it originally began with a man of faith.

When we think of baptizing Gentiles, the question comes: Was it our Lord's intention to limit the rite to males? It has already been answered. But was the head of the family to administer it to his household? We have seen, in Galatians iii, 28, that limitations as to sex, etc., were abolished in sending the gospel to the Gentiles. But as Abraham was commissioned to circumcise, may the head of the family now administer baptism? We do not find that our Lord commissioned any to baptize, except the ministers whom He sent forth under the New Dispensation. Them He also charged to teach others "whatsoever" He had commanded them. Thus the commission to preach and to baptize was given through those first preachers to their successors; nor do we find any case in the records, where others than such ministers baptized. Under Patriarchal rule, the head of the house was God's recognized minister. In course of time the people so multiplied that this plan became impracticable. After the death of Jacob—the last of "the fathers," "the family" came into prominence, Leviticus xxv, 10; Numbers i, 18; Deuteronomy xxix, etc.

When, Exodus xii, the Passover was instituted, the people were told to act by families "according to the house of their fathers"—each head of the family leading. In the New Testament, family government is taught; for God has never repealed that law; see Colossians iii, 21, etc. But, in the reformed Church, all are responsible to Christ (the one Head of the "body"), without former distinctions; "for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Yet the constitution of the

Church is not changed. It is, therefore, incumbent upon every head of a family, if a believer, to see that the law of the covenant is obeyed in his family. It cannot be otherwise, if the constitution of the Church remains the same. And that it was not changed may be illustrated as follows:

At a certain date, our Government, acting through the postal department, changed the color and size of postage stamps. They were green; but the color was changed to red; and the size of the new stamps was a little smaller. But that substitution did not change the constitution of our land. Further, the same class of mail-matter was carried by the new stamps as by the old. But the privilege was enlarged so that the new stamp carried more weight than did the old. After that change, no more green stamps were to be made. This illustration is intended to show that a change in the form of a seal, or token does not change any law, nor any part of a constitution. It is not for application beyond that. It cannot apply to the present and valueless rite of circumcision among the Jews, though it might apply to them had they remained true to God. Look at the illustration in another form:

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTION.	GOD'S CHURCH AND CONSTITUTION.
Stamps, green.	Token, circumcision.
Color changed to red.	Form (for Gentiles) changed to baptism.
Use of stamps, as symbol, unchanged.	Use of token, as symbol unchanged.
Change in stamps, did not change the Constitution.	Change in token, did not change the constitution.
New stamps applied to same class of mail-matter.	New token applied to same class of subjects.
Government had, and used the right to so enlarge privilege, that the new stamp reached more mail-matter than the former stamp did—as to weight.	God had, and used the right to so enlarge privilege, that the new token reached more subjects than the former token did—as to class.

As the green stamps, which remain, are still lawfully applied to mail-matter, so circumcision might, for aught we can say, be still lawfully applied had not Israel apostatized.

The intent of our illustration is not difficult of comprehension, we think. The giving of a new form of token to Gentiles—without the remotest hint that it should not apply to the same classes among them, as were reached by the former token among Israelites, cannot be regarded, by any reasonable mind, as a change in the constitution of the Church. Now as that constitution gave the token to parent and child as specified, why does it not still do so? If the constitution is not changed, then neither is the covenant-relation of the classes, recognized in it, changed. Therefore we must say: As Abraham, in his faith, received circumcision "that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised"—which certainly includes believing Gentiles—and as, under the constitution of the Church organized in his household, he was to give the covenant-token to his infant seed, after having himself received it, so now, Gentiles coming into the same Church, under the same constitution, must first receive the token of membership in confessing their faith, and then cause it to be applied to the same class of their seed—their infants. As the token sent to Gentiles, is baptism, therefore must the believer and his infants be baptized. It is the permanent law of God for His Church!

Having followed to this conclusion, reasonings born of the Word of God, we deal with no objections which "the churches" may make. We leave the matter just as God has revealed it as His own idea of His Church.

But ought not a man be able to say: "I know that I have the seal of God's covenant upon me?" That is a demand for sensible evidence; something which testifies through a man's own feelings, or experience. Will one say, who was baptized in infancy: "I have no satisfactory proof of having been baptized. They tell me I was; but, really I do not know the fact?" Will any say after that

manner? Then what will such an one answer to the question: "How do you certainly know that you were born in legitimate wedlock? They have told you so; but what do you, of yourself, really know?" No man can make oath that, *of his own personal knowledge*, he is the child of the man and woman whom he calls his parents! His entire evidence is in the testimony of those who assert that he is their son! Is the proof less reliable, or less worthy when "they" assert our baptism in infancy?

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PENTECOSTAL BAPTISM.

Uses of the word "baptism"—Pentecostal baptism—Joel's prophecy—Not limited to that Pentecost—No water prophesied, nor used—Peter's converts—Doctrine preached—What baptism Peter preached—John the Baptist—Words of Mark xvi, 16—Words of Acts ii, 38, used but once. Circumcision long after that Pentecost—Recognition of Jewish customs. The Holy Spirit as "water"—On John iii, 5—Translations of "kai." The baptism-act never conferred the Holy Spirit, nor the remission of sins—*Εθνη*, ethnê.

THE word "baptism" has several meanings, or uses, in the Bible. This is a fact often forgotten, or ignored. The rite of baptism is not always referred to. Our studies will principally deal with the baptism "with the Holy Spirit," and with its symbol, the baptism with water. *The latter is really not baptism*, but only its symbol bearing the title of the reality. As to the baptism "with the Holy Spirit," John the Baptist and our Lord only repeated, in substance, the prophecy of Joel which was spoken about eight centuries before; and Peter said that prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, succeeding the ascension of Jesus, Acts ii, 1–33. That was the only baptism which our Lord ever administered. It is the "one baptism" spoken of in Ephesians iv, 5. Baptism with water stands related to it, about as the types of the Old Dispensation stood related to the realities of the work of Christ. It illustrates the need, or the fact (as the case may be), of the renewing and cleansing by the Holy Spirit. By the baptism with the Holy Spirit the disciples were empowered for work and witnessing for Christ, the results of which changed the whole world, in many respects. This is the subject of study, now—The Pentecostal Baptism.

In Joel's prophecy, Chapter ii, 28–32, we read: "And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my

Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

[The word "pour," in Verse 28, is שָׁפַךְ (shäpak) in the Hebrew, and εκχεω (ekcheō) in the Greek. The word "Lord," in Verses 31, 32, should have been "Jehovah" in the translation.]

Peter's quotation was, doubtless, from the Septuagint, which may account for some variation from the language of Joel. For Joel's "afterward"—an expression pointing to the times of the gospel,—Peter substituted the words "last days"; see Hebrews i, 1, 2.

The wonderful events which were to occur before the great day of Jehovah, are found enacted in the scenes connected with the crucifixion of Jesus. That was the time meant in Hebrews ix, 11, by the words "Christ being come,"—the time of the great sacrifice. The "remnant," we see in the "devout (ευλαβης—eulabês), piously inclined men" of Acts ii, 5. They were "called" (Joel ii, 32), and had come to Jerusalem for the "deliverance." (See our Chapter XXIII.)

The terms, "all flesh," and "in those days," show that the outpouring of the Spirit was to be general and continuous. This baptism practically opened the New Dispensation; and from that day we date what may be termed The Dispensation of the Spirit. After studying the prophecy, we cannot limit the baptism with the Holy Spirit to that day of Pentecost, nor to those times. It was not

for the "one hundred and twenty," only, in that upper room. It was to continue in a large and general application. It was prophesied *for the people.* After long and careful study, former opinions are revised here, also; and now we are convinced that this was the baptism received by the "three thousand." The conclusion will not be readily accepted; for all the education of the Church has been in the direction of a baptism with water, in this case. But we realize, as never before, that water is too exclusively associated with the word "baptism," by readers of the Bible.

Again: The general opinion is that Peter's hearers were all unregenerate sinners. This, also, we once thought; but these studies have compelled an abandonment of that belief. (And here, also, we expect adverse criticism.) Circumstances and facts are to be considered. Language is to be studied in the light of the environments of the preacher and the people. We should try to be among them and of them, so as to understand as they naturally would. (Will the reader try so to do?)

What is the testimony? In the main, those hearers were devout worshipers of God and were waiting for His Christ. They were the most earnest and persistently religious people in the world or that the world ever saw. The majority to whom Peter preached had come to Jerusalem from many countries, as expectant believers in the coming Christ; and it is impossible not to believe that there were many holy men among them. If, as a class, they were unregenerate, Peter's sermons meant an utter ignoring of the (then) past and present in the history of God's covenanted people. Though carnalized in great degree, they were not rejecters of the Christ, as we understand that condition; but (in the prophet's words) they "erred in spirit" and in "understanding" as to "Jesus of Nazareth." Their condition was not one of spiritual death and enmity against God, but of error as to the claims of "Jesus of Nazareth"; see Acts xxvi, 6, 7, etc. From that

condition they were to be converted. This is seen in all their history. The special doctrine preached to them is to be noticed. Read carefully Acts ii, 22–36; iii, 13–26. Peter explained "Jesus of Nazareth" to them, saying: "God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ." The word translated "made," is ποιεω (poieō), which has any meaning, from "to form; to construct," to a covenant-making, or establishing. God had established the claims of Jesus as the Christ; and thus Peter called upon his hearers to accept Him. Their conversion was to be to that truth. In Acts iii, he explained Jesus as the "prophet" of whom Moses wrote, and whom they were expecting.

In the particular demand to confess Jesus as the Christ we have light thrown upon expressions used by John in his epistles, about confessing "that Jesus is come in the flesh;" and believing "Jesus is the Christ." See 1 John iv, 2, 3, 15; v, 1, also ii, 22. The mere confession that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," may be made by one who has no saving faith. In James ii, 19, we read that "the devils also believe and tremble."

When our Lord was on earth, there were many illustrations of this truth, e. g., Matthew viii, 29; Mark i, 24, 34; v, 7, 9; Luke iv, 33–36, 41. In these passages, we see devils making full confession of Jesus as the Son of God; yet we know that their confession availed them nothing. So a man may have positive faith of the kind—positive conviction of mind and heart—yet he may be in no wise benefited. Saving faith consists in more than a confession. It extends to the personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as He is offered in the gospel, with submission of life to Him as its Lord. Such faith the devils never exercised though making definite confession; and men may fall as far short, if they do not attain to intelligent views of repentance and faith.

The New Testament preachers were not asking a mere confession, which could be audibly made by any who might

have intellectual faith enough to do so, but for that which resulted from a real change of mind and heart.

In the case of Peter's hearers, who already believed in the Christ, the change involved was to be as real as that required in unregenerate sinners; but the action of repentance and faith were different in this: The unregenerate sinner was to exercise these graces in a first acceptance of the Christ; while the Israelites, already looking to the Christ, were to exercise them in recognizing and accepting "Jesus of Nazareth" as the Christ. Thus in Acts viii, Philip "preached Jesus" to the already-believing Eunuch. He was an Old Testament believer waiting for the Christ, but not knowing "Jesus" as the Christ. Therefore, his confession: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (This verse is omitted in some Greek manuscript, but its words serve as illustration.) The Christ was in the common faith of Israel; but the great question of the time was: "Is Jesus the Christ?" Therefore, the phraseology referred to above.

With unspeakable desire the people were waiting for the Christ, though—as we have shown—in some carnal error. Not a study of their Scriptures which was not a search of tidings about Him! Not a service in temple or synagogue from which they did not try to gather fresh hope and courage for their expectations! All life was bound up in the fervent desire! And can we believe that Peter put such people on the same level with those who knew not God and were "strangers from the covenants of promise?" An examination (not a mere reading) of his message to them, forbids the thought. As already intimated, they needed to be converted, as Peter told them in Acts iii, 19; but from what? (Good theologians understand the difference between conversion and regeneration.) The conversion was to be from the estate of blindness and sin in which they had rejected Jesus as the Christ. Such is the indication in Peter's sermons,—sermons which were not, are not, and cannot be preached to Gentiles; for Gentiles

did not commit the sin about which Peter preached. They did not believe in the Christ, as a people, yet refuse to accept Him in "Jesus of Nazareth." Such passages as Luke xxiii, 34; Acts iii, 17; and 1 Timothy i, 13, are suggestive as to those Israelites.

As Peter explained to his hearers of what they had to repent, his words fell into ears made ready to hear by the scenes of the crucifixion, and the subsequent workings of the Holy Spirit. Conviction became strong and true, until with all their heart those people desired to know what they must do to repair, and recover themselves from the awful error into which—as they realized—they had fallen. But look and see! Their question was not like that of the unregenerate Philippian jailor, the Gentile of Acts xvi, 30. He asked: "Sirs what must I do to be saved?" They asked: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Paul and Silas said to the jailor: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." But Peter said to his hearers: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you (epi—upon) in the name of Jesus Christ (eis) unto the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the (δωρεα—dōrea) gift of the Holy Spirit." Is not there a marked difference? If Peter's hearers were destitute of faith, would he not have called for its exercise? Note too, that the "gift" promised them was not the χαρις (charis—grace, or God's gracious dealing in the plan of salvation)—which is sometimes translated "gift"; but they were to have a literal "gift," in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. Paul preached it as "the (επαγγελια—epaggelia) promised favor and blessing of the Spirit," for the Gentiles. And in Acts ii, 39, Peter preached the very same thing (the epaggelia) to his hearers, as for themselves, their children, "and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,"—that is, Gentiles; see Ephesians ii, 11–13. And now notice the punctuation of Verse 38: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you (epi) upon (but some Greek, en—in) the name of Jesus Christ; (eis, in N. V.)

unto the remission of sins." This may be emphasized thus: "Repent, (and be baptized every one of you upon—or, in—the name of Jesus Christ) unto—or, for,—the remission of sins." Or transpose the words, and read: "Repent for the remission of sins, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." [Note: In the commission to carry the gospel and the rite of baptism to the uncovenanted nations, the preposition is not, as here, "epi,"—or, "en,"—but it is "eis,"—unto (or, as some prefer, "into.").]

The words "In (or, upon) the name of Jesus Christ," told under what authority Peter made his demand; as in Acts iii, 6, the same words explained the authority under which he acted in healing the lame man, and again explained it in Verse 16. When the people obeyed his call they were to receive "the (δωρεα—dōrea) gift of the Holy Spirit," which was distinct from and additional to the baptism "with the Holy Spirit."

We now note certain parallels:

ACTS II, 38.	ACTS III, 19.
"Repent unto the remission of sins."	"Repent * * * that your sins may be blotted out."
"And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."	"(ὁπως—hopōs) So that times of refreshing (αν-ελθωσι—an-elthōsi) may come from the presence of the Lord."

Here it is plain that the results, in each case, were to be the same—the remission, blotting out of sins, and the bestowal of spiritual blessings. Again:

Acts ii, 38: "Be baptized."
Acts iii, 19: "Be converted."

The baptism and the conversion seem to be as synonyms; and each was to be followed by the same spiritual blessing: Baptism by "the gift of the Holy Spirit"; and

conversion, by "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

But what was that repentance? Peter used the verb μετανοεω (metanoeō), which means "to undergo a change in mind and feeling; practically, to reform; to reverse the past." And to what was this to reach? Evidently to the past in which "Jesus of Nazareth" had been rejected. The reversing of conduct was to be in accepting Him as the Christ. Peter's demand was made by express authority of the Lord (Luke xxiv, 47). Therefore, he said: "Be baptized upon (or, in) the name of Jesus Christ."

John the Baptist had "preached the baptism of repentance"; and he had told the people (not the immediate disciples of Christ, only) that Jesus would baptize them "with the Holy Spirit, and with fire." (See our Chapter XXVI.) Now if that baptism was for the people, when did they receive it? We have no evidence that they received it at all, if it be not in the passage before us. But before we go further let one fact be noticed, namely: In the records there is not a shadow of reference to water for that baptism. It is not in Peter's preaching, nor in Joel's prophecy which was the subject of his sermon. Look and see! Both spoke particularly and exclusively of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; and that was the baptism of that day. Is it not so? Yet many read as if Peter had said: "Be baptized with water for the remission of sins." And this, notwithstanding the witness of God's Word, and our own common sense and reason, that there is not, never was, and cannot be any remission of sins as the result of baptism with water!

We have said that "Be baptized"—Acts ii, 38; and "Be converted"—Acts iii, 19, appear to be synonyms. What was that conversion? The Greek word is επιστρεφω (epistrephō)—"to turn towards; to turn round; to bring back; to turn about." The spirit of the message was: "Turn about, and come back to the Christ in whom you believe, but from whom you are gone astray in your

treatment of Jesus of Nazareth." Peter (who wrote his epistles years afterwards, to some of these very people, as is shown in another chapter), used just this idea in 1 Peter ii, 25: "For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." Now we are constrained to believe that this movement—by which these people came into the condition of accepting Jesus as the Christ—was the baptism for which Peter called. Yes; we see the grave shake of many heads; hear the "scouting denial" of not a few; (perchance) the sneer is on the curling lip. Before other eyes than our own have looked upon these pages, we anticipate the sharpest criticisms. But were it in the line of our studies, we could give any reasonable number of proofs from Greek writers showing, beyond contradiction, that they used the word *βαπτιζω* (baptizō) to express any condition into which a person or thing came through controlling influences, and no matter by what process or mode. But our rule of study confines us to the Bible. The point is established even in Bible usage, as when Jesus called the condition of suffering into which He would come, a "baptism"; see Matthew xx, 22, 23. We know that He was not speaking of His baptism by John, for that was past; but this of which He spoke was far on into His ministry.

It may be well, just here, to say that John the Baptist was of the Old Dispensation (see our Chapter XXVI), and though he preached "the baptism of repentance (eis) unto the remission of sins" (Mark i, 4; Luke iii, 3), he was not in Peter's line of work. All that he did was to prepare the people for the Christ *to come.* The water-baptism which he administered (not preached) was of the Old Dispensation ceremonial rites of purification—as we will see later on. But Peter preached the recognition and acceptance of the Christ who *had come;* finished His mission, and ascended to heaven. Neither John, Peter, nor anyone else preached a baptism with water for the remission of sins; nor is there any teaching of such a baptism in the Bible. Why then

should we interpret Peter's sermon on that day of Pentecost, as the preaching of such a baptism? The rite of baptism—whether of the Old or the New Testament—had no essential connection with the remission of sins, nor with salvation. Therefore, in Mark xvi, 16, condemnation does not follow absence of baptism, but absence of faith. On that account, baptism has no mention in the second clause of the verse.

It is a fact to be noticed, that neither Peter nor anyone else ever again used the words of Acts ii, 38, whether preaching to Jews or Gentiles! And in preaching to Gentiles, they were never used even once! Had Peter intended that his hearers should receive the rite of Christian baptism, when he said "be baptized," the demand would have meant:

I. That those adults should receive the rite, not upon profession of faith, but of repentance, only; for we do not see that he said one word about faith; and his preaching was entirely about the duty of repentance with respect to "Jesus of Nazareth." The rite was sent to Gentiles, who were to be discipled to Christ whom they had never known.

II. That those covenant-loving Jews should, at a word, renounce their covenant standing; ignore their circumcision—which they valued as their lives—and receive a new rite without preparation or explanation.

III. That Peter was thoroughly heterodox, in preaching baptism with water for the remission of sins, in opposition to all the testimony of God's Word which teaches that remission of sins is only through Divine operation.

The baptism for which he called swept his hearers into the acceptance of "Jesus of Nazareth" as the Christ at the rate of three thousand within less than one day! And some other considerations convince us that it must have been the spiritual rather than the outward rite. *Long after that Pentecost* (*Acts xv*) *believing Jews were holding, most tenaciously,* to their *circumcision as the token of their membership in the Church of Christ.* And they were Jews who went

from Jerusalem to Antioch, where they contended for the application of circumcision to Gentile converts to Christ. When their contention was transferred to the consideration of a church court at Jerusalem, other Jews rose up there to sustain them, even in the face of Christ's Apostles and elders. Moreover, they were not rebuked by that court of Christ's Church for holding to their circumcision; but it was only decided the rite should not be imposed on Gentiles who became Christians. How then can we imagine that *Jews of earlier date* would ignore that token without a murmur? If, after all the Christian education received from the time of Acts ii to Acts xv—about eighteen years—believing Jews not only most firmly held to their own circumcision, but also insisted that Gentile converts should be circumcised, it seems incredible that Peter's hearers should abandon the rite and accept a substitute in water baptism. Still more: The Apostles not only did not rebuke their clinging to the old rite for converted Jews, but Paul made concessions to them, on this very line, long after he became a preacher of the gospel. In Acts xvi, 3, we see that instead of baptizing the semi-Jew, Timothy, he circumcised him in order to give him favor with the Jews. Not a word shows that this half Jew was ever baptized. See also Acts xxi, 17–26; xxviii, 17.

Peter, also, refused to depart from Jewish ways some time after that Pentecost (Acts x), nor would he yield until God's command was specially given him. All things conspire to show that he did not, at the earlier date, ask his brother Jews to ignore their circumcision and receive a baptism with water.

We found it very difficult to accept the conclusion that the Pentecostal baptism was only spiritual, and not the rite of baptism; for lifelong education had, so to speak, put the water into our eyes. We could not see beyond it until we realized that *the baptism of the Bible* is not a baptism with water, but the baptism "with the Holy Spirit," of which the baptism with water is but the outward symbol. We

find that even where water is mentioned, the rite of baptism is not always intended. For example: In John iii, 5 (A. V.), Jesus said: "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Our study says that the word "and," here, should be "even." The Greek conjunction "kai" is, in this passage, *explicative*, or explanatory. We know that, here again, we depart from current exposition; but, without pretense to superior wisdom, we hold our view as true. Our Lord was speaking entirely of the work of the Holy Spirit in producing spiritual life.

We say of this passage as of others: The easiest and safest way of understanding the Scriptures is to watch connections and interpret according to them, and in keeping with the subject which is being treated. Now, some interpret "born of water" as an expression of nativity. This we cannot accept. It seems "a far cry." Few, if any, whether Jews or Gentiles, did or do understand that; and, above all, it was not our Lord's subject. What was His subject? Plainly, the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Let us keep to that. In accord with our criticism above, we read Verse 5 thus: "Except a man be born of water (*και*—kai) even the Spirit," etc. We translate "kai" as explicative. This is done in sundry other passages. In Verse 8 the teaching is about spiritual birth only. There is no reference to natural birth, we think. It is often said, and is no doubt true, that Jews considered promised blessings as their birthright; and that is the very error which our Lord was correcting. The translation, "born again," is wrong. The word *ανωθεν* (anōthen) [translated "again"] means "from above; from a higher place," etc., and so "from heaven." The meaning, "again, or anew," is a secondary idea. As the heavenly birth was our Lord's subject—the change wrought by the Holy Spirit from heaven—any other interpretation of "anōthen" than "from above," is forced and unnatural. To the majority of people the idea of "nativity in water" is as "fodder

put too high for the sheep." Science may know what that means, but common people would never imagine it. Our Lord's purpose was, evidently, to show that no natural birth could give rights to "the kingdom of God"; and that such rights were to be obtained through the agency of the Holy Spirit, only. Hence, "ye must be born from above." Nicodemus' question was not so much, "How can a man be born again?"; but, "How can a man be born when he is old?" The balance of his question shows that he regarded our Lord as utterly ignoring the natural birth; as if he had said: "What! Am I now to be born for the first time? Must I go through that impossible process before I can be considered as born?" Therefore, our Lord taught him, Verse 6, that the birth in the flesh raised one no higher than its origin—the flesh; and that only the birth by the Spirit could raise anyone to the spiritual life. But, Verse 10, that was just what "the teacher of Israel"—the Jew, Nicodemus—did not understand any more than he understood the science of the winds, Verse 8. He was wrapped up, mentally, in the "proud traditions of the fathers," and could not realize that God was under no obligation to give Jewish birth salvation. Therefore, "How can these things be?" But it was an "earthly thing" to hold that Jewish idea. The "teacher of Israel" had no spiritual discernment. So he could not believe when the Lord taught that mere Jewish birth gave no right to God's favor. With his mind full of that Jewish idea, how could he believe the contradictory teaching of "heavenly things"—the need of birth "from above" by the act of the Spirit of God? He would have made no objection to the doctrine had Jesus applied it to the Gentiles, the "dogs," as Israel called them, but to teach any such things as applicable to the God-chosen Jew, that was too much! Our Lord's doctrine in Verse 6 answers the cavil of Nicodemus in Verse 4 to this point: Even though a man should experience natural birth the second time, that would not save him, for he would still be of the

corrupt nature, unchanged in his need of spiritual renewing. To say, "Except a man be born naturally and also spiritually, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," is to waste words, a thing our Lord never did. One is not a man until he is born naturally; therefore nothing can be said to or of him. Only after natural birth does the man exist (in common phrase); and only after that can he be spoken to or of. The point is, not that a man must be born naturally before he can enter into the kingdom of God, but that the man who *has been born* must also be born "from above" as the additional and essential preparation for entering into the kingdom of God. It "goes without saying," that if a man is not born naturally he cannot enter, for he has no recognized existence. So to speak, he is a nonentity. It is the natural man—the already-born man—who must receive the supernatural birth; and of this already-born man the Lord spoke.

We regard "born of water," and "born of the Spirit," as synonymous. They mean the same thing—the latter being explanatory of the former. To say that "born of water" means baptism with water, is to say that unless one receives the rite of baptism "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" and that the outward rite is as essential to salvation as the inward renewing by the Spirit; for the two sayings are coupled together, in our Lord's teachings, and there is no authority for separating them. Look! "Except a man be born of water (A. V.) and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Read that as thus translated, and this inevitably follows: "Water baptism and the spiritual birth are equally essential. The spiritual birth, alone, is not enough to save a man; but it is necessary, in order to his salvation, that the baptism with water shall also be received." Can evangelical views accept this? Certainly not! Yet how escape its acceptance if we hold that this passage means a baptism with water? What right have we to interpret one part of our Lord's teaching as meaning something different from the other part, when the

assertion in one is the assertion in the other, and each declares the same thing? Now we do not accept two parts, in this teaching, but we say: The teaching is one, but having two expressions meaning the same thing—the latter being explanatory of the former. The teaching is of the renewing act of the Holy Spirit, and nothing else.

The further we go into these studies, the more we are convinced of the errors:

I. Of supposing that water always belongs to the mention of baptism in the Bible.

II. Of supposing that every mention of water in the Bible means the rite of baptism.

III. Of disparaging the "one baptism" by insisting that the words "baptism," "baptize" and "baptized," must refer to the rite in all cases.

A thorough study of the sacred records will do much toward winning approval for our interpretation of the Pentecostal baptism.

That water is used to express the benefits of the Holy Spirit, no Bible reader should be able to doubt. In John vii, "rivers of living water" are made to represent the Spirit. But John explained: "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." See Isaiah xliv, 3.

As to the translation of the little word "kai," there was not too much care; for it is translated fourteen different ways in Matthew; eleven in Mark; seventeen in Luke; twelve in John; thirteen in Acts; ten in Romans; fourteen in 1 Corinthians, and so on to the end. And thus, in due time, we will show as to the prepositions. Such discoveries cause us to emphasize the assertion, already made, that interpretations must be determined by the subject and connections. We find other passages in which our translation of "kai" is justified, e. g., 2 Corinthians i, 3; 1 Thessalonians iii, 13; 2 Thessalonians ii, 16, etc. The words "God (kai) and Father," do not mean two persons; but as translated in other places, "God, even (our, or the, as the case may be) Father."

The gift and work of the Holy Spirit came to the Church through that Pentecostal outpouring; but the rite of Christian baptism had not then been so much as mentioned by the preachers, for they had not, at the time, faced a Gentile audience, nor preached to any outside of Israel. Power was given the Apostles to, instrumentally, bestow the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon others, by the "Laying on of hands"; but that was always by an act entirely separate and distinct from the act of baptizing with water, Acts xix, 5, 6. (Our Chapter XXVI.) No baptism administered by man, ever conferred the gifts of the Spirit, nor remission of sins. The entire bestowal, as in Acts ii, was from the risen Lord; and all in accord with His foregoing promises, which assure us of the Spirit's continued abiding, John xiv, 16, 17, 26; xv, 26; xvi, 13–15, etc. Compare Acts i, 4–8.

CHAPTER XXII.

SAUL OF TARSUS.

Was a covenanted man—Valued his circumcision—Salvation in the Old Testament Scriptures—Continuance of baptism with the Spirit—Saul's conversion and baptism—What Ananias did—Saul and other Apostles. Texts about cleansing: 1 Corinthians vi, 11; Ephesians v, 26, etc.—A danger to be avoided.

THE study of this man's history confirms some things said in the last chapter. He was a Jew, and a member of God's covenanted Church in Israel. Like many others, he supposed that opposition to "Jesus of Nazareth" was service to God and to the hoped-for Christ, Acts xxvi, 9. It was all the result of a most lamentable misunderstanding. This he declared repeatedly. When introduced to us he was prominent as a leader of the opposition and was very proud of his blameless law-standing. Never did he hold, even as a gospel preacher, that the law was wrong for and useless to the Jew if not put in the stead of Christ; and all his life he held the temple service in special reverence. He never taught any Jew to abandon circumcision, or to ignore it for his people, in favor of the rite of baptism which was the substitute sent to the Gentiles (Matthew xxviii, 19)—the "*ethne*," a term used to distinguish between Jews and other nations. As late as Acts xxviii, 17, he said: "I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers." Neither he nor the other Apostles ever taught Israel to turn away from the old covenant which "God in Christ" made with "the fathers"; and when Peter, with other Jews, began to compromise with Gentiles, to the disparagement of Jewish customs (Galatians ii), recognizing Peter as the leader of those who "dissembled," he says: "I withstood him to the face because he was to be blamed." Thus we see how strict a

Jew he was, even as a minister of Christ. It was he, also, who taught that Christ was the "spiritual Rock" following Israel in the wilderness journey while "the law" was in full force; and, that as far back as Abraham the gospel of the faith of Christ was preached. That he valued his circumcision, received in his infancy, is seen in Philippians iii, 5, and that he fully understood its significance is seen in Romans iv.

But did this law-reverencing, covenant-loving, circumcision-valuing Jew receive the rite of Christian baptism, when he accepted Jesus as the Christ? In common with others, so we once thought. But, as in some other instances, we are bound to surrender former views to the revelations of these studies.

It must be that there is much error abroad concerning those Jews who had only the Old Testament Scriptures as their guide. So was it with all who lived in the time of Saul of Tarsus. He referred to those Scriptures when, in 2 Timothy iii, 15, he said: "From a child, thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." He, himself, had that faith as to "the Christ," before he knew Jesus as the Christ. See our Lord's words in John v, 39. All Bible readers have, doubtless, noticed how often He and His Apostles made appeals to those Scriptures in their teachings. So Peter told Cornelius of the witness of all the prophets for Christ, "that through his name, whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." By the Old Testament teachings, those living before the full revelation of Christ, were led to salvation as truly as we now are. So we believe of Saul of Tarsus—that he was a true believer, and in a saved condition.

At this point we state a fact which has an important bearing upon the study in this chapter, namely: *Saul of Tarsus was within the time of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.* That baptism certainly continued to be poured out, here and there, during the (about) six years after the Pentecost,

to the time of Cornelius and his friends, for Peter said of them: "God gave them the like gift, as he did unto us," Acts xi, 17. As other words in connection show, the reference was to the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts ii), for Peter explained: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning." Therefore, it is clear that as Saul was before Cornelius, in the history, he was within the time of the reception of that baptism; and our studies constrain us to believe that it was the baptism which he received. The Gentile, Cornelius, also received baptism with water; but the reasons upon which we base the assertion that Saul was not baptized with water but with the Holy Spirit will now be given.

He was a member of God's Visible Church; of the seed of Abraham; a circumcised believer in the Christ to come, and was earnestly waiting for Him. *Therefore, he was not a subject for a rite which was ordained to be used in establishing the Church among uncovenanted Gentiles.* We appeal to the records in proof of the correctness of this conclusion, Acts, ix; xxii; xxvi.

I. In zeal for God and the expected Christ, this earnest believer in the Christ to come approached Damascus in the prosecution of his work of opposing "Jesus of Nazareth," not of fighting against the Christ. The risen Jesus appeared to him in such glory as smote him to the earth, blinded. Then was the time of his conversion from error and ignorance as to Jesus, 1 Timothy i, 13; Acts xxvi, 9. He was of those concerning whom Jesus told His disciples: "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service," John xvi, 2.

II. Amazed and humbled, he cried: "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer was, (not Christ, but) "Jesus whom thou persecutest." Then he had his first conception of the truth, and, in a repentance ready for any amends, he asked: "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" He was sent to Damascus to await further revelations. Having entered the city, he remained in his blindness during three days.

III. We read: "There was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord, in a vision, * * * Arise and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision, a man named Ananias, coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight. * * * And Ananias went his way and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way, as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Compare Acts i, 5; ii, 4.

Paul's rehearsal of all this, years afterwards, does not vary materially. The exceptions are:

(1.) He said that Jesus, personally, gave him his commission.

(2.) He spoke of Ananias as "a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*"—i. e., in Damascus.

(3.) He represented Ananias as saying to him, after the return of sight: "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Would water-baptism wash away his sins?) In no record do we find any intimation that Ananias was sent to baptize Saul, or that anyone else was commissioned to do so. Ananias did not say that he sought Saul for any such purpose; but he said: "Jesus hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Then the record says: "He received his sight, and was baptized." He came into some condition, through controlling influence. What was it?

That Ananias did not baptize him is seen thus:

(*a.*) He had not been commissioned to do it, so far as evidence is given.

(*b.*) He was not a Christian minister of the gospel; but only "a devout man." Our Lord commissioned His ministers, only; and through them their successors. If Ananias was not thus commissioned, he had no right to act. (See our Chapter XXXV.)

(*c.*) Ananias is called "a disciple," but also "a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt" in Damascus. Now the manner in which those Jews treated Saul for preaching Jesus as the Christ, some time later, is pretty sure evidence that Ananias was not a preacher of that gospel. To escape being killed by those Jews Saul had to flee from the city secretly and at night, being let out over the city wall through a window. *Had Ananias been a gospel preacher, he would not have been so popular with those would-be murderers of Saul.* Evidently his popularity was on account of his law-record. But how could this "devout" disciple of the law pass over Saul's circumcision (a rite which Jews held as confirmed by the law); and how could he ignore his own record as a law-Jew, and administer Christian baptism to another Jew? In this he would have been an exception to all his Jewish brethren, all of whom, as we have shown, clung to circumcision as their church-token even after accepting Jesus as the Christ. We find it impossible to imagine a "devout" law-Jew so departing from the faith and manners of his time and people.

The mission of Ananias ended when he had done what he was sent to do; that is, when he had laid his hands on Saul that he might receive his sight. With the rite of Christian baptism, "a devout man according to the law" had nothing to do, and no sympathy towards it.

Paul's words in 2 Corinthians xi, 5, and his conduct as seen in Galatians ii, 8–14, together with what we read in Romans i, 1; xi, 13; 1 Corinthians ix, 1; 2 Corinthians i, 1, suggest another line of thought. He says that he accounted himself as in no way inferior to those who were prominent as Apostles. He acted as Peter's equal, if not superior, in

the rebuke in Galatians ii. We know, by studying his character, that he was no conceited boaster; but it is plain that he did attach the greatest importance to his *Apostolic equality*. Doubtless he had need to do so, because of the circumstances under which he became an Apostle—called "as of one born out of due time," 1 Corinthians xv, 8. He was not of those originally called. Now one thing impresses us, namely: Every other Apostle had not only seen the risen Jesus, as a part of his furnishing as a witness of His resurrection; but *each one had been specially and miraculously fitted for his work by a particular baptism with the Holy Spirit* in that upper room at Jerusalem. But where was Paul's equality in this furnishing? One part he had, in having seen the risen Lord, and another in having been personally called by Him; but he needed yet another, in the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Did he ever receive this last? If so, when and where? In all the records there is no answer, if it is not in Acts ix, 17, 18; xxii, 16, in which passages we are told that he was baptized and that he was "filled with the Holy Spirit," as were the disciples at Jerusalem. What do those words, "filled with the Holy Spirit," mean as applied to the disciples in the "upper room" at Jerusalem? Do they not mean the same thing when applied to Saul at Damascus? Let it be so, and his furnishing is completed; and he is, indeed, the equal of the other chosen witnesses of the Lord's resurrection. We present another object-lesson, filling out Saul's record according to these suggestions.

APOSTLES—ACTS I; II.	SAUL—ACTS IX; XXII.
Received their appointment from the risen Jesus, in person.	Received his appointment from the risen Jesus, in person.
After being formally notified of their commission, they were commanded to remain in Jerusalem for further revelations.	After being formally notified of his commission, he was commanded to remain in Damascus for further revelations.

APOSTLES—ACTS I; II.	SAUL—ACTS IX; XXII.
The risen Lord had shown Himself to them in a special manner.	The risen Lord had shown Himself to him in a special manner.
While waiting in Jerusalem, they were engaged in prayer.	While waiting in Damascus, he was engaged in prayer.
Afterwards, they were "baptized with," and so, "filled with the Holy Spirit."	Afterwards, he was "baptized with," and so, "filled with the Holy Spirit."
They received power after the Holy Spirit came upon them.	He received power after the Holy Spirit came upon him.
Then their witnessing for Jesus, as the Christ, was so convincing to the Jews that all who heard them were amazed; but some were angered.	Then his witnessing for Jesus, as the Christ, was so convincing to the Jews that all who heard him were amazed; but some were angered.
For so preaching Christ, they were persecuted.	For so preaching Christ, he was persecuted.

Is it unreasonable that this parallel should stand? Was not Saul's baptism that with the Holy Spirit? But see yet another parallel:

Peter said to his Jewish hearers: "Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Put the reported words of Ananias together, and he said to his Jewish hearer: "Be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord. And be filled with the Holy Spirit."

With language so nearly alike, and evidently spoken in the same meaning, we cannot doubt that Saul's baptism was one with that received on the day of Pentecost.

When Ananias said: "Be baptized, and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord,"—the "washing away of sins" stands connected with "calling on the name of the Lord." So Peter's words, "for the remission of sins," stand connected with the repentance which looked

to the "name of Jesus (as the) Christ." The doctrine is one in both cases, and is the doctrine of the Bible. We note several passages containing this doctrine:

1 Corinthians vi, 11—The "washing" is ascribed to "the Spirit of God."

Ephesians v, 26—The Church (not individuals) is "sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word." Here, the Word is the instrument by which the washing is done. So our Lord taught in John xv, 3: "Ye are clean through the Word"; and in John xvii, 17, "Sanctify them through thy * * * Word." The "washing with water" is, therefore, only a term used to symbolize the work of the applied Word of God. It is made effective by the Holy Spirit, only. Thus we read in 1 Peter i, 22, "Your souls having purified by obedience to the truth, through the Spirit." (See the Greek.)

Titus iii, 5, 6—"He saved us through the (λουτρου—loutrou) washing of regeneration ("kai," explicative) *even* the renewing of the Holy Spirit which (εξεχεεν—execheen) he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ"—the way in which the baptism with the Holy Spirit was given. See Isaiah xliv, 3; Ezekiel xi, 5, etc.

This is the doctrine of the life of the Church, which should be preserved inviolable; for the most perilous of all things is to lead any to seek salvation where God has not placed it! To avoid error let the intention of the Holy Spirit first be ascertained, then let all interpretation be made to accord with it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

COVENANT WORKINGS.

General remarks—Token received but once—Prerequisites—Duty of covenanted child, and of parents—How the Church begins and lives—Why the covenant?—Parental duty—Religious education by the Church. The "three thousand"—Character of—The "others"—Who crucified Jesus?—"The dispersion" and Peter's epistles.

BY the terms of the covenant which God made with Abraham, its workings were to extend to parents and children throughout all generations; for no limit was set as to its duration. That it was to extend beyond Israelitish bounds is also clear in the teachings of the Scriptures. On this point the Apostle Paul is particularly positive. As already seen, he declares that Abraham "is the father of us all"—so appointed of God—in entire disregard of all circumstances except one: "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Thus the law for the permanent existence of the covenant is for Gentiles as for Jews, if Christ's. Under this condition the covenant is ours, and we are as much bound to "keep" it, as were those to whom its terms were first spoken. The Apostle has taught us that we, "as Isaac was, are children of the promise." Ours is a faith-connection through Christ. But are our children subject to the penalty of being cut off from God's people, if we disobey the command to apply the token of the covenant to them? We can say with certainty that there is no repeal of that law on record. It follows, therefore, that it is still in force. Yet, because of the larger privileges of the New Dispensation, the rigor of the penalty may be abated; but it is a conclusion of reason that the blessings of God will more surely come upon those who keep His covenant, than upon

others. We have shown that the prerequisite for the reception of the token was faith in the adult, in the first organization of the Church, and in establishing the Church where it had not before existed. After that, the covenant requirement is that the believing parent shall cause the token to be applied to his infant seed. The obligation is thus acknowledged to train our children in the service of God. This is seen not only in God's expressed expectation (Genesis xviii, 19) that Abraham would so train his household; but it is seen in other passages enjoining the duty, such as Proverbs xxii, 6; Ephesians vi, 4. Thus the covenant was to work out good; for, evidently, God considered that a child trained for Him would the more surely serve Him at mature age. Reaching the age when spiritual duties can be intelligently discerned, the covenanted child is to give practical recognition to the obligations assumed in his behalf by the parent, by taking his place in the full membership of the Church. The giving of the token to him in his infancy, was an act to which God bound the believing parent, whereby the child was acknowledged as being a member of the covenanted Church by virtue of connection with the believing parent; and it was also confession of God's right in the child. Thus he was set apart to God's service. These covenant principles our Apostle recognizes in 1 Corinthians vii, 14, where he says: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the (believing) wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the (believing) husband; else were your children unclean: but now are they (hagia) holy"—set apart from a common condition and use; dedicated, etc. By this teaching, the covenant relation is established where only one parent is a believer. In such case God claims the children as his servants; and they are to be separated from a common condition and use, and dedicated to Him. If the believing parent neglects or refuses to act for the child, he is guilty of disobedience to God's covenant-law, under which the Visible Church was organized; and every such disobedience tends, in its

measure, to disorganize and destroy the Church. God has made a special claim upon His covenanted people, which they are bound to acknowledge. Of course, every creature of God is under obligation to acknowledge duty to Him, the Creator; and no denial can affect the fact of responsibility; but the covenant assuredly calls those embraced in it to a special admission of the claims of God. This is testified in the reception of the token by those covenanted, and by their transmission of it to their seed.

The Church was ordained as the special medium through which this confession is to be made. It, as is the case with every organization, had to begin. We have seen how it began with believing Abraham and Sarah. They, being taken into covenant with God, were to do their part towards the perpetuation of the society formed of their household, by transmitting the token of membership to those succeeding them; and this was to be repeated in every following generation among "all nations" to the end of Time. Thus the preservation of the Church was Divinely made the duty of all believing parents. Every generation, in its turn, was to assume the duty, that a "seed" might always be before Jehovah. Should the covenanted child neglect or refuse to accept and confess the faith, at maturity, the responsibility is then his own if his parents have faithfully performed their duties. For the parents cannot exercise personal faith for their children. They can only exercise faith in the covenant promise of God to be a God unto them and to their seed after them; then, in discharging the covenant-duties to their children, they have every right to expect that God will perform His part of the covenant. The mere giving of the covenant-token to the child can be of no benefit unless the obligation thus recognized, of training the child for God, is truly discharged. The covenant was made for binding God's people to a special training of their children for His service. But, in the very nature of the case, we must realize that no one can dictate times and seasons for God's fulfillment of

His promises. Yet, as He is true, the final good results are for those who abide faithful in duty. We seek in vain for any promise to others. Not only may neglect be expected to be the forerunner of loss; but loss is, ordinarily, almost certain when the child is allowed to grow up doing according to its own will. And, here we say, the increase of the evil of parental neglect should startle the Church! Of late years it has been rapid and great!

The covenant-law is seen to be perpetual and in force for the New Dispensation, in the command: "Bring them (your children) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Ephesians vi, 4. The word, "nurture" is, in the Greek, παιδεια (paideia); and means "education; training up." It expresses the duty of positive and careful education of our children for God. It is a command! Therefore, to neglect the duty is sin against God, and also against our children. It is sometimes objected that a child's choice should not be forestalled; that it should have liberty to select for itself, etc. But, if the Bible is our rule, such objections are disobedience to the revealed will of God. Why object in this particular sphere? We do not act so, with regard to other matters touching the management of our children. No one thinks of applying such ideas to secular education. On the contrary, there we choose for our children; then compel them to conform to our judgment and wishes. Therefore, the objection against educating for God rests upon a false foundation.

But what has all this to do with God's own idea of His Church? Much, in every way. As we have been trying to show, His idea is that His Church must keep its children for Him. This is to be done by those who, naturally, have the care of them. Ought the Church, a spiritual body, to take active part in their education then? This question is best answered by another: How can the Church fulfill its covenant obligations otherwise? In Ephesians iv, 11, "teachers" are among the divine gifts to the Church. It may be that the first application is to those who are to "feed

the flock of God" as "overseers." But it is reason to say, that the meaning extends to all in the Church to whom God has given talent for such work. And observation proves that there are those who are peculiarly so gifted. In Ephesians iv, 12, the "gifts" are said to have been bestowed (we give a more literal translation), "With a view to the perfecting of the saints, for work of service, for building up of the body of Christ." Real ability to teach is an endowment of God. Ought not the Church to seek and use it in the service of Him who gave it? Religious teachers are needed as accessary to the work of "pastors," and as supporters of believing parents in their efforts to keep their children for God. And unless the Church employs these helps, it fails in an essential part of its covenanted duty to protect the "seed" committed to its cultivation. Let one thing be realized: There is more teaching done in educational institutions, than at home, in the course of a child's training. During the greater part of every one of the five "school days," the children are under the influence of teachers in the schools. In all that time they are away from parental oversight; and that means that they are principally in the hands of the teachers the greater part of their youth, extending through the very years in which impressions are most easily and durably made, and when the life-bent is given to character. The "soil" of heart and mind is then in its most favorable condition for the reception of whatever seed may be sown in it, for the harvest of life's future reaping. Changing the figure to the trite, but true adage, "as the twig is bent, the tree is inclined," what hands are bending "the twig" which is to develop into "the tree" of future life? Ought not the Church to know? Does the Church know? An un-Christian teacher, or institution, may undo all of the best influences, by sowing the "tares" of ungodly instruction, in the ready soil of a child's existence. Take the axiomatic saying: "The child is father of the man"; and ought not the Church to make sure, so far as in its power, that the child shall be safely taught? Look

at the matter in what light we may, it is essential that the Church, in order to insure the safe-keeping of the "seed," should build around them the "fence" of a sound religious instruction, and allow none within its circle but those who serve for Christ. For who can reasonably expect that Christian adults will result from the influence of un-Christian causes?

What is duty to the "seed" of God's covenant? It was He who caused the commands in Proverbs xxii, 6; Ephesians vi, 4, to be recorded. In Proverbs xxii, 6, the word train is חַנֵּךְ (chanokh), meaning: "1. To straighten; to choke. 2. To stuff into one's mouth, or jaws; to give taste—so, to imbue one with anything; to train." The child is to be started with a right taste, as to life. The inculcation of "good taste" is to prevent the formation of a vitiated taste.

And there is the further idea of hedging in the child "upon the mouth of his way"—the opening, or entrance to his future course in life. Of himself, he is not apt to go rightly, at all times, for he does not altogether understand the difference between good and evil, as yet; and, moreover, he has a heart all too ready to desire the evil, because of the sin-taint in his blood. Do the shepherds wish the sheep to go into some pasture, or a place of shelter? Then they hedge them in upon the entrance, and persist in doing so, until they succeed. Such is the character of the training commanded for the covenanted children of the Church. It is to be earnestly given to the child, (literally) "because he grows old"; and ere long the opportunity will be passed away. It is God's wisdom for preparatory protection of future life. "Hedge in a child upon" that future where God will meet and know him as His own! What does it all mean? This: That parents must remember and perform their covenant-vows, in the watchfulness of unyielding patience, preservance and prayer. The temporal and eternal destiny of immortal souls is for their shaping; and the responsibility is upon them in having given their children an existence. Added to this is God's covenant-binding, by

which He offers to give His Divine enabling to the human weakness, and His divine wisdom to the human ignorance. His own promise also binds Him in the covenant; but the means to its fulfillment must be supplied in the faithful discharge of covenanted duties by the parents. And who is the parent? A member, with his child, in God's covenanted Church. What next? Both parent and child are placed under the care, and in the keeping of the Church. What, then, is the obligation which God has laid upon the Church?

And there is that other command for the keeping of the children: "Bring them up in the (*παιδεια*—paideia) education and (*νουθεσια*—nouthesia) warning of the Lord." If it is duty for parents to see to it that their children are educated for the Lord, it is the duty of the Church to see, in all the extent of its ability, that these, its members, are assisted and protected in their efforts. Here is duty which cannot be discharged through stated public means of grace, alone. These are occasional; but the child's training is going on all the time. Though parents train ever so well at home; if the children are kept under the influence of godless teachers, there is every probability that the best home influences will be counteracted. Is it not the duty of the Church to guard against such results, so far as it can be done? *The covenant duty of the Church is to make Christians of its children*, so far as the use of God's means will serve to that end. None can take exception to that proposition. How, then, is this duty to be performed if the children are left to a sort of promiscuous handling? The fact (already alluded to) that Christian home-training is in a state of decadence, is before us, adding to the perils of the situation. Nearly all the child-training has fallen into the hands of—whom? Does the Church know? And do parents think, or even care, as the question concerns spiritual things? We must not be considered as condemning Sunday Schools, but is it not true that the chief part—in some cases, all—of the religious training of the children of the Church has been

given over to them? Then, in five out of the remaining six days of the week, the children are in the keeping of—whom? Does the Church know? Do parents think? Does anyone at all, care? In regard to Sunday Schools, we say this: So far as Church or parents commit the whole religious training of the children to them, that is disobedience to the vows and duties of God's covenant! How can there be hope that one hour per week in Sunday Schools, will counteract the influence of fifty hours of secular training during the week? Worse and more alarming still, is the fact of a growing tendency of separation of the children from the ordinances of the Church, through the (misuse of) Sunday Schools. This is becoming more pronounced and serious. It is the substitution of an agency, savoring of, yet not really of God's ordaining. In Ephesians iii, Paul says that revelation was given unto him "To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, * * * to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be (made) known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." It is God's chosen and ordained agency. Therefore, nothing on earth should be allowed to usurp its place, in taking its covenanted children out of its direct care. The Sunday School may belong to the Church, but *it is not the Church!* Originally, as is well known, it was mission-work of private Christians, in behalf of those who were of "the highways and hedges." It may now be regarded as an instrument for Church work. But it should not ever be allowed to take the religious training of the children out of the hands of parents, nor to come between the children and the Church. Only when the Sunday School is made to second the parental efforts, and to tie the children more strongly to the Church, is it right for the people of God's covenant.

Returning to the study of the Divine records, more directly, we see covenant-workings in the case of the "three thousand" on the day of Pentecost. They were foreign-born Jews who composed the body of Peter's hearers.

They had been reared in heathen countries; but were the children of God's covenanted people who had their synagogues, and worshiped God and waited for His Christ, even among the heathen with whom they sojourned. Whatever adverse circumstances, or other reasons had caused the residence of the parents away from their home-land, here were their children with the token of God's covenant upon them; and doubtless many of the parents were with them. They were God's marked possession; and He had not forgotten them, though it may be that they had—in the words of the prophet who foretold their return—"erred in spirit" and failed in "understanding," through untoward influences. But, as God once recovered their fathers from Egyptian bondage, so did He recover these, their children, from spiritual bondage. He "called" them, and they came flocking to Jerusalem when Messiah's time was near. The prophets had said it would be so. We may be sure that they had heard of "Jesus of Nazareth," in their far-away homes; but, as has always been the way, it is probable that reports were exaggerated in proportion to the distance they were carried. Yet these people were in better frame for instruction than the native Jews who had been manipulated by scheming Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, whose power was jeopardized by the light of truth which Jesus flashed upon their false lives. In our study we find them to be men who truly reverenced God, and who put somewhat of right value upon His service. "Devout men," they are called, in Acts ii, 5. In the common version the same translation is given to a different word, ευσεβης (eusebês), in the case of Cornelius. This word (eusebês) has the direct sense of "reverent; pious; religious." See the Greek of 2 Peter ii, 9, which is rendered, "godly." The bearing is upon practical life; a truly godly living, as was the conduct of Cornelius. But the word in Acts ii, 5 is ευλαβης (eulabês), meaning "cautious; circumspect; full of reverence towards God; devout;" and its application is more to the direction of feelings, the inclination of mind

and heart, than to practical living. These men worshiped God with reverence, but it is not certain, as in the case of Cornelius and friends, that the living was truly pious. They may have been tainted with heathenism, in the midst of which they were born and reared. But they should never be confounded with the Jews of Verse 13, who are pointedly distinguished from them in the words, "Others mocking, said (of the disciples), These men are full of new wine." These mockers were Jerusalem Jews—who were narrow-minded, bigoted, fanatical; or more probably, they were chiefly Scribes and Pharisees who were always more than ready with cavils, and whose presence in any crowd could be detected by "flings" at all pertaining to "Jesus of Nazareth."

But note that *not one irreverent word nor act* is heard or seen in those foreign-born Jews! We read, Verses 7, 12: They were all amazed; and marvelled, saying one to another, What meaneth this? And see the character of their comments: "We do hear them speaking in our own tongues, the wonderful works of God, each in our own language wherein we were born." Evidently they felt much drawn towards the preachers. The home-tongue sounded as sweet music in their ears; and they gathered about the speakers to hear yet more of the (μαγαλεια—magaleia) great things of God. And what a marvel! Each heard in the language he had first lisped at his mother's knee! Surely that touched and softened their hearts, and prepared the way for the message. Indeed, to them, it was a miracle; and, possibly, the first they ever saw. May they not have felt that God had specially interposed for them, in sending the message in their own tongues? Thus, we may believe, Peter had a prepared and willing audience, in this "remnant" of which Joel had prophesied. See also Isaiah xi, 11. Jehovah had "called" them; and they had come to "find deliverance" which was to "be in Jerusalem." They came in time to be among the error-crazed crucifiers of Jesus; and, perhaps (never having been with Him as had the home-born

Jews), they were the tools of His enemies who could play upon their feelings all the more successfully just because they had never known Him well. But they also came in time to share in the great baptism with the Holy Spirit which dispelled the mists of misunderstanding, and wrought in them repentance and faith towards "Jesus of Nazareth" as the Christ. What did it mean, but that God remembered His covenant with "the fathers"? But we were in some perplexity when seeing, on the one hand, how popular Jesus was with the people; then, on the other, what a multitude apparently indorsed His crucifixion. Then came the theory that those whose shouts applauded the Romans (who were the active executors of the sentence of crucifixion) may have been the Jews of foreign birth led on by the real instigators of the deed—"the rulers of the people" in ecclesiastical matters. (Read Matthew xxvii, 11–20.) Those "devout men out of every nation under heaven" had not known very much, if anything, by personal association with Jesus. It is possible that they were but recent comers to Jerusalem; and, being ignorant in great measure of His evidences, were easy victims of the religious leaders whom they would naturally reverence and trust because of their high position. This idea is sustained—indeed, it was suggested by Peter's words in which he charged the sin of the crucifixion not only upon the people, but upon their leaders also; Acts iii, 17.

After that day of Pentecost there came a great persecution against the Christians at Jerusalem, and they were scattered abroad; Acts viii. It is certain that many of those foreign-born converts returned to their former homes. But God, still remembering them, caused the word to follow them; for some of the nationalities, mentioned in Acts ii, are those to whom Peter wrote his epistles; see 1 Peter i, 1. The preacher who had won them for Jesus appreciated their need of being built up and stablished in the faith. Therefore, his epistles were written (see Greek) "To the elect sojourners of the dispersion of Pontus, of Galatia, of

Cappadocia, of Asia," etc. Geographically, some of the other places mentioned in Acts ii, were adjoining, or near those mentioned in the epistles. Thus the teachings would reach all. They were written years after the dispersion, which shows how faithfully the preacher remembered them. So Peter obeyed the Lord's last instruction: "Feed my sheep." And because the circumstances of the scattered ones were very trying, in the midst of the heathen, Peter said: "Now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold (πειρασμοις—peirasmois) trials." Therefore, too, he wrote: "Pass the time of your sojourning in fear,"—careful solicitude to conform to the duties of Christian living. See also 1 Peter ii, 11, 12, where he says: "As strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; having your conversation (conduct) honest among the (εθνεσιν—ethnesin) heathen nations, that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, (εποπτευσοντες—epopteusontes) witnessing your good works, glorify God in the day (επισκοπης—episkopês) of inspection." They were not evil doers; but were mocked at by the adherents of heathen religions who watched (inspected) their new ways, or their new religion. In the history touched by this chapter (Acts ii) we see God's fulfillment of the promise in Isaiah xi, 12, that He would "set up an ensign for the nations," and gather His scattered ones "from the four corners of the earth."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BONDS OF UNION.

No hope in human power—What, if we cannot agree with God?—Grouping of God's ideas—Christ the heart of all—Triple bonds—The Interpreter of Christ—Scope of the one baptism—Visible oneness—*Μερος*, meros, 1 Corinthians xii, 27—Two unities—Bonds, old and new—Night from Malachi to Matthew—The "morning" shows no change—Preparations to receive Gentiles.

HAVING seen how God gathers together all things in one, in the Church, our next question is: How can all be held together in permanent oneness and peace? We cannot think that God intended human wisdom and power to be the keepers, more than the creators of His Church. The power and wisdom are of God; but human instrumentalities, ordained and ruled by the Divine Creator, are the means through which these are to operate. A permanent oneness is not to be reached by our selected charitable compromises. The Divine will must be found as it really exists in the inspired Word, then must follow unreserved acceptance by all the "churches." Human arguments and wranglings will effect nothing. As man speaks to man, one is sure to require concessions from another; and each is apt to feel that his is the side to which concessions should be made. So is human nature, which is just the element to be cast out. The law of concessions must have no place in this matter. The question to be considered is not: Who are right? or, To whom must others yield? Its one form is What is God's own idea of His Church? If it be said that there can be no satisfactory answer found, that will be to say one of two things:

I. That God *has not* expressed, or *cannot* express His will intelligently; or

II. That God's expression of His will must be understood as we desire.

The latter is bigotry, ever ready to dictate; never ready to submit. Only "the sheet of blank paper" will truly receive God's impressions. Let it be now laid under His hand, that the Holy Spirit may sum up His teachings upon it. Then let every sentence be studied, that we may be sure it is a "Thus saith the Lord."

Our studies say that His teachings about the Visible Church are as follows:

I. 1. Its Creator was God; Genesis xvii; Isaiah xliii, 1–7. 2. Its Redeemer was Christ; Isaiah liv, 5: John viii, 56–58; Ephesians i, 7. 3. Its constitution was, and is, the Abrahamic covenant; Genesis xvii; Romans iv; Galatians iii, iv.

II. 1. It is the household of God; Ephesians ii, 19. 2. It is the body of Christ; 1 Corinthians xii, 27; Ephesians i, 23; Colossians i, 18, etc. 3. Its members are the seed of Abraham; Galatians iii, 7, 28, 29; iv, 28.

III. 1. It is God's building; 1 Corinthians iii, 9. 2. Its chief corner-stone is Christ; Ephesians ii, 20; 1 Peter ii, 6. 3. Its building materials are Abraham's seed; Isaiah li, 1, 2. Galatians iii; Romans iv.

IV. 1. It has one God and Heavenly Father; Malachi ii, 10; 1 Corinthians viii, 6; Ephesians iv, 6. 2. It has one Head and Lord; John i, 3; 1 Corinthians viii, 6; Ephesians i, 10, 22, 23; iii, 9; iv, 15. 3. It has one earth-father, who is "the heir of the world;" Genesis xii, 3; xvii, 4, 5; Romans iv, 13–17.

V. 1. It is one family in one fellowship; Galatians iii, 28; Ephesians iii, 14, 15; 1 Corinthians x, 16, 17. 2. It has one name as its watchword; Ephesians i, 20, 21; iii, 14, 15; Philippians ii, 9–11. 3. It has one object; Ephesians iv, 12–16.

In this doctrine of the life of the Church, it is seen that our Lord is the central figure—the heart of each group. So He stands in all the Scriptures. It was He who made

Abraham glad; who inspired Isaiah's pen and tongue for prophetic preaching; the sight of whom as "The Sun of Righteousness," kindled the light in Malachi's eyes; and who subdued fiery, ardent Saul of Tarsus, so that his chief boast was in being "the slave of Jesus Christ." In all ages of the Church He has been its life, light, glory and hope; the subject of Prophets and Apostles in all their preaching; the soul of the gospel; the Head of the Church, which is His body; and in Him all things consist. His Church is held together in the triple bonds of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Ephesians iv, 5. As "one Lord," His is the only authority to rule the Church, which is His body. The one faith is that which Abraham had when he "was glad" in seeing the "day" of the Christ; which Isaiah preached for the Christ, saying: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth;" in which the hosts beyond Calvary marched to meet the crucified One, that at His feet they might join the hosts coming from the world of the Gentiles, and all together—Jews and Gentiles—be one in Him. And so it was that Paul greeted all with the gospel of one hope for all, saying: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus the Christ." The "one baptism" is that saving act of the Holy Spirit whereby He so interprets Christ, the "one Lord," that sinners accept Him in the "one faith," and are brought into the condition of "one body" in union to Him.

Jesus did not always explain himself, nor allow others to do so at the first, Matthew xvi, 20, etc. In John xvi, 12–14, He taught His disciples: "I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Thus were the disciples, and all who should succeed them, to be furnished as witnesses to the "truth as it is in Jesus."

And so is the Holy Spirit the Interpreter of Christ. When He so explains Him to our need that we receive and are united to Him in the "one faith," then is the "one baptism" into His atoning death, whereby we were "crucified with Christ." And all who are thus baptized are one in Him, and "members one of another" in their union in His one Church—His one body. Therefore, in Ephesians iv, 3, we read: "Endeavoring to (τηρεῖν—têrein) preserve the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace;" for (as it is written in 1 Corinthians xii, 13), "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body; whether we be Jews or (Ἕλληνες—Hellênes) Greeks; whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." These words cause us to remember the baptism shed forth on that "great day of Pentecost," when the disciples were "all filled with the Spirit." Also Acts iv, 31; x, 44. This oneness is not only spiritual in all the redeemed; but it is, also, the form of the existence of the Visible Church; for so the Apostle taught in his illustration from the oneness of the human body, and in other ways. The local churches, at Rome, Colosse, etc., were told that they were members one of another—"members in particular"—but all of the one body. The word μερος (meros), which is translated "particular," means "a part, portion, or division of the whole." Paul used it in the sense of "partnership, or fellowship" in common interests as Christ's Church. The doctrine is that the Church, as the body of Christ, had a wholeness wherever the work of the gospel gathered a people together for Christ—all its local parts being of one fellowship. It was co-partnership under one Head.

With this doctrine, the idea of spiritual oneness and visible divisions full of differences, does not agree. Which is the right way? Disunity, whether visible or invisible, does not accord with teachings of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." We do not understand,

if a practical oneness is not taught in such passages as Romans xii, 5; 1 Corinthians xii, 12, and Ephesians i, 10, 22, 23; iv, 5; and not the remotest warrant can we find for an existence in denominational bodies. Visible oneness! Not only can we find nothing contrary to it, but all teachings of Scripture—no matter in what form given—seem definitely to demand it as the practical expression of God's idea of His Church. Certainly, in God's Word, there is no shadow of such divisions as now appear. As we said in our Chapter XVI, there were "sects," but they were outside of, and opposed to the Church.

Our studies led us to understand that under the Old Dispensation, the bonds of union were one Jehovah, one faith, one circumcision, making one system of faith and manners. Under the New Dispensation we find the bonds to be "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," continuing the Church in one system of faith and manners,—the circumcision of the Old and the baptism-rite of the New Dispensation being the outward symbols of spiritual cleansing needed, or effected. And as the old bonds sufficed so well to keep God's people in oneness, we feel the force in the question, Are the new bonds weaker, or less adapted for keeping the oneness? Did a weakness, or a disintegrating quality come in with the change of the form of the covenant-token? That, if anything, must be the cause of divisions; for we still have the "one Lord," and the "one faith."

Under the Old Dispensation there was one ordinance of fellowship for all Israel—the Passover—by which every Israelite united with every other Israelite in commemorating the deliverance from physical death, through the great and merciful interposition of God. Under the New Dispensation, there is but one ordinance of fellowship—the Lord's Supper—by which every Christian is called to unite with every other Christian in commemorating the greater deliverance from spiritual death, through a far more wonderful and merciful interposition of God in Christ. It is

for the whole body in its co-partnership of members under the one Head—Christ. Has this less attracting force, in the common interests represented, than had the Passover? or, has the "one faith" in the slain "Lamb of God" less magnetic influence for drawing and keeping together the people of the greater redemption? When and where did the bonds begin to be sundered? From the ascension of our Lord, to the end of Apostolic ministry this and every other bond held the Church together in spite of all strains upon the ties. What and where is the difference now?

The doctrine of the fatherhood of Abraham and the brotherhood of all the seed, so conspicuously and constantly taught in the Scriptures—and with such emphasis in the New Testament—must surely have a meaning! Our studies say that it demands the continued visible oneness of the one and same Church. The Old Dispensation bonds were never really destroyed. They were only *rearranged* in the reforming work of our Lord. By the one sacrifice of himself He fulfilled all the type-prophecies, himself succeeding to the old high priesthood as the one, exclusive High Priest of His Church, forever. He changed the form of the covenant-token when He opened His Church to the Gentiles; but in vain have we searched for any change in the Church itself or in its constitution, warranting the idea of a new Church which was not to exist in visible oneness as of old.

In the Old Testament (as arranged in our Bible), God's records ceased with Malachi for the space of four or five centuries; and began again with Matthew. It was a deep, dark, silent gulf, across which no voice called to tell us what had become of God's Church. Then was night during which, in spiritual revolution, the earth was turning its face towards "the Sun of Righteousness." At last the dawn came; then the light; and the Church was seen coming up out of the deep gulf, led by One called "Jesus." As He came, He cried: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." In that light the Church stood

forth once more to clear view. We drew near to look upon it; and, behold, it was the same organization of which we lost sight as the twilight of the Old Dispensation's day deepened into darkness; and the last of the prophets—his service ended—extinguished his lamp and went to his "long sleep." In the dawning of the New Testament-day we saw that the God who was in the past, was in that present. His Church still carried the token of circumcision, and came into nearer, clearer view; for the clouds were gone and the mists melted away before the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness"—God in Christ—who was revealed in grace and truth "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Nothing of the life of the Church was changed. The doors of synagogue and temple still stood open for the worshipers; the altar still called for and received its sacrifices; the priest, circled about by the smoke of the burnt offerings, was keeping the sacred fires alight, while the fragrance from his swinging censers filled the air; and all the people stood waiting before the ministration in "The Holy of Holies."

So have our eyes looked upon what Moses and the Prophets saw beyond the darkness, as we stood in the light which was growing into a new day! So too, we beheld Jesus take His "winnowing-shovel" in His hand and begin the purging of "his floor;" for the Father's house was to be set in order for the guests from the Gentile world who were soon to be invited. The "chaff" of hypocrisy and the dust of formalism were cast out; and in the vineyard, the vines were pruned and the cumbering, fruitless trees were cut down and cleared away. The work went on apace; but no changes save of the kind here noted, were made in the "household of God" until the great hour for opening the doors for the new guests whom, in the greatness of His love, the Father had determined to adopt into His family. And all was according to God's own mind. Then He drove away intruders—not of His friends—sent them away that the true family might be ready to receive the new brethren who were about to arrive. Yea; all was as the Father

wished and ordered long ago! We gazed earnestly and steadfastly upon "the only begotten Son," Jesus, and those whom He called to His service—watching every movement, and what we saw is here written. He made no changes in the Father's will and promises, but fulfilled all. As the household of God had ever been, so He confirmed it; nor did He ever speak of the incoming of divisions except to condemn them. Thus when He gave His renovated Church to the New Dispensation ministry, He left it in the bonds of a oneness strong and perfect. And particularly did the Apostle, under whose instruction He placed the Gentile adopted ones, rebuke all divisions as not of Christ, but "conformable to men"; and he called those who would cause them, "carnal."

CHAPTER XXV.

A JOURNEY IN THE BONDS.

No guide-boards back of Abraham's tent—Our journey retraced—"Fullness of time," and of "times"—From Mamre to Bethlehem—About infants—Prophecy of Isaiah xl, 10, 11—Fulfillments—"Lambkins," John xxi, 15–17—The open arms—The "new man"—At Calvary. From Jewish sepulchre to Gentiles—Divisions not Jewish origin—What would Jesus do, now?

IN our Chapter II we began to seek the origin of the Church. We traced back as God's way-marks led, until we came to the covenanted society in the tent of Abraham, and there our leadings ceased. We could discover no guide-boards beyond, therefore, concluded that the object of our search was attained. We believed we had reached the birth-place of the Visible Church. We had found the organization which was to travel "to the end of the world," and carry the richest blessings of God to "all families of the earth." As it started on its pilgrimage to the time of Him who was coming from heaven in the flesh, to meet it, we walked at its side until we saw Jesus take it in charge in manifested personal presence; cleanse it from the dust and moil of travel and send it forth upon the wider mission to the world of heathenism. So much of profit and interest was found in that journey that we repeat it, if perchance, advantaged by what we learned before, a better understanding of all things may be gained.

At the outset let note be taken of two sentences in our "guide-book," which read so much alike that an unobservant student might confound them. In Galatians iv, 4, the words "fulness of *time*," refer to the time of our Lord's incarnation. In Ephesians i, 10, the term "fulness of *times*," means the end of the gospel dispensation. This distinction is important. We now resume the history of our journey.

Having reached the tent of Abraham we found a company gathered there, in character unlike any which had ever before assembled on earth. Learning that it was the young Church which God had just created, we joined its company when told that it was about to begin a pilgrimage of many centuries towards "the fulness of time." With God's Spirit as the inspiration of its life and courage, it traveled in the visible fashion of its organization, having faith in God's covenant of promise for its mission of blessing to nations yet unborn, and for the inheritance of the world. The precious charter of its rights it held in one hand, and with the other it gathered to its embrace the little children which God had committed to its care, and for whose keeping He made it responsible. After varied sojournings, here and there, and often in sore travail, it reached Bethlehem of Judea where it found Him awaiting its coming, to meet whom the great journey was undertaken, the God manifest in the flesh, who had fitted himself to be the Saviour of little babes by entering into the world through human birth. For He remembered the little ones to whom, as Jehovah, He had given love and promise in His covenant whereby His Church came into being. Therefore did He take upon Himself the beginnings of human life for their salvation. For death by sin reigned over all, "even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Romans v, 14. There, at Bethlehem, His Church tarried with Him for a brief season, until the fulfillment of the prophesies called Him to that retirement wherein He was to await the hour of His public manifestation unto Israel. When He finally came forth to the people, His Church went the further earth-path at His side, while He lived through the years of the duties of those He had come to redeem from "the curse of the law, being made a curse for them." That work being finished, as He was about to "ascend up where He was before,"—that is, to heaven—He took into His hands the covenant which had been so long preserved among the Israelitish seed of

Abraham, and changing its form of token and enlarging its privileges for all nations, He gave it again to His Church, with no other change, commanding that in fulfillment of its promises it should be carried to "all families of the earth" among the "many nations" unto the end of the world. And to show that His dispensation of this covenant did not separate the infant seed of His people from God, He had said before—when some forbade them to be brought to Him—"Suffer the (παιδια—paidia) infants to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Then He took them up in His arms, close to His loving heart, and "he put his hands upon them and blessed them." So was His example to His Church, that in disciplining the heathen to His religion it should continue to gather to Him, in His covenant with the parents, the little children, that they might be kept for God among the Gentiles as in Israel. For He would thus have the prophecy of Him to be fulfilled, in which was said: "Prepare ye the way of Jehovah; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. * * And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. * * * Behold, Jehovah God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the young lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom," Isaiah xl, 3, 5, 10, 11. Therefore did Jesus say "I am the good Shepherd"—when He stood with His Church in Israel—"and other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd," John x. So did He call from the midst of His Church, to all nations, "that the Gentiles might rejoice with his people," Israel, and all flesh should see, together, the revealed salvation of Jehovah. And when "his work was before him," after His triumph over death, once more He arranged as the prophet had said, that the "lambs" should not be neglected nor forgotten. For not

only had He given example of His care for them before He suffered death, by gathering them "with his arm" and carrying them "in his bosom" (Mark ix, 36; x, 13–16), but in the days of His sojourn after His resurrection—having "all power in heaven and on earth."—He gave special command in John xxi, 15–17, that His "(αρνια—arnia) lambkins" should be fed in caring for the "(προβατα, probata) sheep." And it is to be noted—as if He remembered the spirit once shown by His disciples when they "displeased" Him, Mark x, 13, 14,—that He gave the command, "Feed my young lambs," before He spoke of feeding the sheep. Thus did He emphasize the importance which He attached to His covenant for "the seed" of His people; and in such manner He who came in "the fulness of time," ordained the work of His Church towards "the fulness of times." By the illustrations of actions; then by command, as "Head over all things to the Church," He arranged that "the promise might be made sure to all the seed"—whether adult or infant; whether Jew or Gentile; bond or free; male or female; for it was for "all families of the earth" where the parents "walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all before God;" see Romans iv, 16, 17. Thus, from its birth, did the Church live, grow and strive towards the promise which was to be fulfilled in what the "one Lord" would do for "all families of the earth." For in "one faith" were all bound and to be bound together; and by the "one baptism" with the Spirit, were they all to be "baptized into one body" holding to the one Head, the Christ. Therefore, after His Church had come to Him out of the country of the Old Dispensation, it was needful that His arms should be stretched out on the cross to which all looked and where the faith of the olden time and that of the new, met,—one arm apart from the other; for between the lost world of Jews and Gentiles, and the heart which loved them all as only God can love, nothing was to come. And so were His arms opened wide, one reaching toward the

past where Israel's need had so long waited amidst its "signal fires" of distress under sin; and the other reaching toward the future where the Gentile need groaned in the darkness of heathenism. He would draw both unto himself, by the sacrifice of himself for both. "The one Lord" died that the "one faith" and the "one baptism" might be for all; and so, to make in himself, "of twain, one new man,"—a man who, unlike the Jew shut in by "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," had no brotherhood with the Gentile; a man who, unlike the Gentile shut out by the same unrelenting law, could have no brotherhood with the Jew. "One new man" who, being in the "one Lord" through the "one faith" wrought by the "one baptism," was "neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female," but one in the "one Lord" over all, and one with all and with every other one in Christ. For "the enmity" was destroyed by "the cross" when one pierced hand gave the blood-sprinkling to the Jew and the other pierced hand gave the same blood-sprinking to the Gentile; and the great heart of the one Mediator was opened to pour out its blood for all the faith which should claim the "so great salvation" unto the end of the world—seeking "remission of sins" in the one atonement. In the human nature of our Lord, which shed the cleansing blood, was the cementing virtue which held the Old and the New Dispensations of the one Church together. The human body of the Christ was the connecting link, which united, in the spiritual kinship, the Israelitish and Gentile seed of Abraham. Therefore is His Church, and therefore are His people in all ages, not "twain," but "one." For He had received in His own flesh the token of the covenant which was first commanded for the seed of Abraham, that He might be "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, (βεβαιωσαι—bebaiōsai) to cause to be fulfilled the promises made unto the fathers," Romans xv. And that "the Gentiles might rejoice with his people and glorify God for his mercy," He confessed Him among them by His gospel, and called them into the opened "household of

God," the one Father of all. So it was that the hand of this circumcised minister, which opened the door of salvation "to the Jew first," also opened the same door to the Gentiles. And He who had received upon His own person the first "token of the covenant" given to Israel, was the same whose command, spoken in His circumcised body, gave the new token—baptism—to the Gentiles as the symbol of cleansing under the New Dispensation of the one Spirit. Therefore was it that the Apostle to the Gentiles wrote: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." And this, because from the closed gates of Eden, Old Testament faith, sorely tried and tossed in its first lonely struggles, came to meet the great "I AM"—who is Jesus—in the plain of Mamre; for thither did He call it that He might there give it the "rod and the staff" of His promises, and bind His people unto himself and to each other in the everlasting covenant for themselves and their seed after them. With this new support faith walked in comforted safety, the further ways of its journeyings towards Calvary's tragic scenes. Its path was by rivers of blood and among ever-burning fires on sacrificial altars. Yet did it walk surely on, until it brought to the cross those whom it was leading; and there was the crown put upon them; and so was it that these all obtained a good report through faith. And there, after the long pilgrimage of the Old Dispensation, did they forever quench the thirst of their souls at the fountain which had been "opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." Then was it, too, that "the promises made unto the fathers" began to come forward seeking fulfillment, that "all families of the earth" might be blessed and the "many nations" might have the faith of the gospel "preached before unto Abraham," and that the "seed" might come into the inheritance with "the heir of the world—the father of us all before God." Therefore, when Jesus had finished His work on the cross, He passed out through the doorway of a Jewish sepulchre that he might give of "the

water of life" to the Gentiles. And since He had "made both one by the cross," it was arranged that this "water of life" should be carried to the Gentiles by the hands of Jewish ministers. Thus, in the inspired history, we read how those who had walked the darker way to the midnight of the cross, came forth with "The Sun of Righteousness" into the new day, to meet those who were also "called to be saints" in the clearer light revealed to the Gentiles. "The Sun of Righteousness" had risen "with healing in his wings" for the sin-wounds of the whole world! It was after this glorious beginning of "the fulness of times," in which all things are to be gathered together to be one in Christ, that Jesus sent His Apostle, Paul, to the Gentiles that he might teach us what to believe as to God's idea of His Church, and how we "ought to behave" ourselves "in the house of God." His message is: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the (κλησεως—klêseōs) 'calling wherewith ye are called, * * * endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." In these bonds has God willed that His Church should walk through earth to its heavenly home. Wherefore, if this be so, what God hath joined together let not man put asunder!

It is a striking fact that no Jewish hand ever sought to disturb these bonds. And this, notwithstanding Jewish jealousy of Gentiles. In the New Testament records, the one approach to a disturbance of the oneness of the Church was made by Gentiles, 1 Corinthians i, 10–13.

It was only after the Church had passed out of Jewish control, and was ruled by Gentiles, that divisions came which are now called "denominations." They are purely of Gentile origin. Thinking of this fact—for so it is—we close this chapter wondering, anew, what our "one Lord" would do, and to whom among us He would turn with approval, were He to make a visit to this world.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CHURCH EXTENSION.

Always contemplated—Commanded—Rite of baptism; its token—Delay before work—Character of John's baptism—He prophesied two baptisms—Points in his commission—No remission of sins in his baptism. John not of the gospel ministry—His disciples re-baptized by Paul. Apollos—Dispensation for Jews—Not church extension—Old Testament baptisms and covenant—What, if the token not changed?—Principles hold—The two words in Matthew xxviii, 19, 20—Epistles—Succession of preachers.

WE have learned that God always contemplated the perpetuity and extension of His Church. The society of Genesis xvii was to develop into the Church of all the world. The "kingdom of God" had been bounded by Israel's altars and types, but the commission, in Matthew xxviii, 18–20, opened it to all the nations of the earth. It was the command of Him who "came to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," that the Gentiles might rejoice with His people. And as the enlarged kingdom was to be of enlarged privileges, He changed the form of the covenant-token for the Gentiles and for the New Dispensation, that all might receive it. Thus the Church knows what is called "Christian baptism," or the rite of baptism with water, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (We use the term "Holy Spirit," as preferable to "Holy Ghost." No matter how translated, the Greek is the same,—*ἁγιου πνευματος*—hagiou pneumatos.)

We have seen that even after receiving their commission, the preachers were to wait until they received "power from on high," through the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Not until after that baptism did church-extension begin. Therefore, its token—Christian baptism—could not have been previously administered; and as it was sent to "the

nations" only, it could not have been used in work among the Jews. Their ceremonial washings are called "baptisms" in the Greek of Hebrews ix, 10, but were not the rite of Christian baptism. The command in Matthew xxviii was to be obeyed when the preachers carried the gospel to the Gentiles. Seeing that this is so, it becomes necessary to notice the rite administered by John the Baptist, that it may be dismissed from thoughts of church extension. (See our Chapters XXVIII and XXXII.)

He was the son of Zacharias, an Aaronic priest, and his mother was Elisabeth, of the daughters of Aaron. He was, therefore, a full-blooded priest of the Aaronic order, though many have failed to see this fact, Luke i, 5. He was sent to baptize (John i, 33), which was a common part of the priest's work under the Old Dispensation. But in addition, he was to prophecy and explain the coming and reforming mission of Jesus, Matthew iii, 11, 12.

He showed that the work of Jesus was to be both preservative and destructive. He declared that Jesus would administer a dual baptism to the multitudes who flocked to his own baptism: 1. "With the Holy Spirit." 2. "With fire." We regard the first as for the revival of the Church; the second, as for purifying the Church, as "chaff" is separated from the wheat. Formalists and hypocrites were to be cast out. So John preached. The time of the Holy Spirit's baptism was the day of Pentecost, of Acts ii, and it was to be continuous in special manifestations until the close of Apostolic work, being their extraordinary furnishing for power in their mission; and it was, also, to be unto the people before whom they were to witness for Jesus as the Christ, Acts i, 5–8; ii; iii; x. When the disciples received it, "cloven tongues as of fire" were the evidence in symbol of the Holy Spirit's presence. They were not fire, but ὁσει πυρος (hosei puros)—like unto fire. Nor was the other baptism of real fire; but so was represented the searching, purifying tests which Jesus would apply to Israel.

John's work was introductory to our Lord's mission of reformation. Of his baptizing we note as follows:

His commission differed from that of the Apostles, and all gospel preachers, (1.) In its source. (2.) In its subjects. (3.) In the results following. (4.) Character. (5.) Purposes. It had no visible relation to church-extension, but it was mainly for Israelites among whom the Church already existed, and was solely in the interests of reformation preparations. There were no mission fields in Israel; and there was no enlargement of the Church in John's work. His baptism was for those already in (at least) professed covenant relations with God, and who were looking for the Christ to come. He received no new members into the Church; but the whole drift of his preaching was in the direction of warnings to repent of false living while professing to be the covenanted people of God. According to his teachings, the reformation by Jesus would make the Church smaller. It was to be purged by the baptism "with fire." The appearance of the bulk of "wheat" was deceptive, because of the large intermixture of "chaff." The (πτυον—ptuon) "winnowing-shovel" revealed the truth. And so, too, there were fewer "trees" in the "vineyard," after those proved to be barren had been cut out. But this separating work of Jesus prepared the way for a safe enlargement of the Church afterwards. The chief influence of John's work was to concentrate attention upon the fact that the Christ was near, and that the people should be in readiness to receive Him. He preached: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and each historian was careful to explain that he came "to prepare the way of the Lord." It was very much such a mission as Moses performed at Mt. Sinai, in preparing the people for a special manifestation of Jehovah.

The source of John's authority was not in Christ. He was commissioned by God the Father, and began his work before Christ was manifested to Israel. This distinction is made in all the records; and those who would understand

the Scriptures should not overlook nor forget it. So far as can be discovered, there was no intercourse, of any kind, between Jesus and John before they met on the bank of the Jordan, near the close of John's work; and then, as John declares (John i, 29–34) he would not have known Him except by special revelation from God. None of the disciples whom Jesus commissioned could have so spoken. The gospel preachers had their commission immediately from Jesus on earth; but John had received his, before and immediately from the Father in heaven. Therefore, he distinguished between Jesus, and "he that sent me." Compare John i, 33, and Luke iii, 2. Each person of the God-head acted separately at the baptism of Jesus, which was preparatory to His anointing with the Holy Spirit; see Acts iv, 27; x, 38. Only after that time did Jesus publicly begin His work of reforming the Church, and thus preparing it for its New Dispensation career. The great Priest awaited the legal age for anointing to full office. (See our Chapter XXXV.)

John baptized those who confessed their sins in view of the warning that the Christ would soon come; and that those who desired remission of sins must, in order to that, "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." His rite was, clearly, the symbol of a baptism which he could not administer, i. e., "the baptism of repentance," which was the burden of his preaching; see Mark i, 4; Luke iii, 3; Acts xix, 4. God sent him so to preach—to urge the people to come into the condition of repentance; and when they professed to have done so, he baptized them with water (Matthew iii, 11; Mark i, 8 and Luke iii, 16) in token of his official acceptance of that profession. Further than that he could not go; for repentance was their act, not his. He could only call upon them to exercise repentance, in order that God might bestow remission of sins. This accords, perfectly, with both reason and Scripture. It is *fact*, and when we know a fact, all else must be interpreted to agree with it. Nowhere are we taught as Scriptural truth, what is Scriptural falsehood.

Everything in John's work shows that it was not connected with church extension, and that he was not of the gospel ministry; Matthew xi, 11; Luke vii, 28. It is evident that some Samaritans, and others than Jews, were baptized by John. It is on record that twelve Ephesians received baptism at his hands, Acts xix. Yet Paul rebaptized them "in the name of the Lord Jesus," as Philip (not the Apostle) baptized the Samaritans when they confessed Christ, Acts viii, 16. In both cases the gift of the Spirit was conferred by a separate act; and in the case of the Samaritans, by different persons than the baptizer. The men of Acts xix, may have been of Jewish faith, as was Crispus, but not of Jewish lineage. Therefore, when they accepted Jesus as the Christ, they received Christian baptism. Circumcised Jews received the ceremonial purification-rite from the priest, John, but those who were not Jews received Christian baptism in addition to the baptism from John, when accepting Jesus as the Christ. In Acts xviii, 24–28, we read of Apollos, a Jewish preacher of the gospel, who did good work; but there is no evidence of his baptism, even by John. In Verse 24, it is said: "He spake and taught (*ακριβως*—akribōs) accurately the things of the Lord (*επισταμενος*—epistamenos), being acquainted only with the baptism of John;" that is, he knew the doctrine of John's baptism and preached it. But Aquila and Priscilla, two intelligent Christians, "(*ακριβεστερον* — akribesteron) more exactly expounded to him the way of God." This shows that he had not been teaching from a fully correct gospel standpoint. But he was forwarding the work of church-extension, for he was preaching at Ephesus outside of Jewish bounds. Within Israel there could, as we said, be no church-extension, though, as on that day of Pentecost, there were church additions. The reforming work sought and retained the faithful ones, while ridding the Church of those who were disobedient. Before and during the extension of the Church among the Gentiles, the Jews received special spiritual attention. They had a personal

dispensation of the gospel. See Luke xxiv, 47; Acts i, 8; x, 39; xi, 19; Romans i, 16; ii, 9, 10, etc. Also Matthew x, 5, 6; xxiii, 37.

Early in the ministry of Jesus, John's work seems to have come to an end by his imprisonment, Matthew iv, 12; Luke iii, 19, 20. We find no records of it after Matthew iii; Mark, i; Luke iii; John iv. His work ended before church-extension began. (See our Chapter XXXII.) From the beginnings of ceremonial purifications God gave laws for using water ritually. But not until the time of John was its use mentioned in the records as "baptism"; and so far as can be ascertained, it had no connection with the covenant of the Church under the Old Dispensation. Doubtless that old ceremonial use has become associated, in some minds, with the Christian rite (which was to accompany church-extension), because in John's work it was called "baptism," and seems to stand among the things of the New Testament. Reading that John "baptized," some have classed him with New Testament workers. In another place (our Chapter XXXII,) this error is corrected.

We saw, in our Chapters XIX and XX, that the Christian rite must necessarily go to the same classes in church-extension, as those to which circumcision went before that work began. All must be able to realize that no idea of different subjects, or of excluding one class of subjects, would have been suggested had our Lord, instead of saying, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them," said: "Go and teach all nations, circumcising them." In that case circumcision would have been administered according to the formula given for baptizing in Matthew xxviii, 19; and none would have imagined that it was not to continue for the same classes among Gentiles, as formerly in Israel. Believing parents and their seed would still be regarded as forming the Visible Church among Gentiles, as among Jews. But in our Chapter XX, we saw that a mere change in the form of token, could not change the constitution of the Church. This being so, it inevitably follows that the work of church-extension would carry baptism to the newly

covenanted adults and their children. To grasp this conclusion, it is essential that we keep in mind the fact already emphasized, that the commission of Matthew xxviii was not for work among the Jews but for the extension of the Church among "the nations" not of Jewish lineage, and among whom God then had no covenanted people. That baptism was not intended for believers, only, is seen in the fact that faith is not even mentioned in the "Great Commission," as it is called. Find it, who can, in Matthew xxviii, 18–20, where the full text of that commission is recorded. The statements found in other places, were clearly for those adults who had never been God's covenanted people, and applied to them only. God had no Church among the Gentiles. Let that be remembered. Then we understand that, in extending the Church among the Gentiles, there must have been a *beginning with adults*, as when it had to begin with believing adults in the household of Abraham. It was necessary, first to secure believers as the material for organization. After that, as the constitution was not changed, the foundation principles were to continue in force and operation. Those principles looked to the extension of the Church to "all nations"; and when the Great Commission was given, it sent the preachers to carry out that for which God had thus arranged, by applying the constitutional laws in organizing the Church among the "many nations." Let the terms of their commission be well examined, for in a matter of such moment there should be no superficial study leading to hasty and unreliable conclusions. Of the two words which are translated alike, the "teach" of Verse 19, is in the Greek, *μαθητευω* (mathêteuō), meaning "to disciple, or proselyte" from false religions to the religion of Christ. But the "teaching" of Verse 20, is *διδασκω* (didaskō), a wholly different word even in appearance as it is in meaning. It means just what we use the word to express, i. e., "instruction, teaching, educating," etc., whether in private or public. In the commission it applied to the instruction of the proselyted heathen of that day, in the doctrines and

duties of the religion of Christ. All peoples of the earth had religions of some kind, but the gospel preachers were to win, disciple, them to the true religion. Having done that,—having received them as pupils or disciples of Christ, their initiation was to be by baptism, and after that they were to be taught according to the Lord's commands for His Church. So the two words mean, in connection with church-extension. It was partially in obedience to Christ's commission of His preachers, that the epistles of the New Testament were written. They are permanent teachings on doctrine and duty; and may be regarded as commentaries on the "whatsoever" original teachings those first preachers, in Matthew xxviii, received from the Lord. And that our Christ-chosen Apostle, Paul, left the Lord's will for us, cannot be doubted. See also 2 Peter i, 12–16. Beyond doubt the Apostles gave much oral instruction while they lived; but the epistles are their permanent teachings. We notice that the majority of those writings came from the pen of the "Apostle to the Gentiles."

A further provision, in that commission, was for a continuance of the supply of preachers. Those first disciples were commanded to preach and teach the gospel, as learned of Christ. Then the command for church-extension was, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The first preachers could not live always; therefore the necessity of teaching others who would, by such instruction, be fitted to take the places made vacant by death. Thus the preaching, when according to the Lord's will, is authoritative. This is treated in our Chapter XXXV.

The preaching transmitted to the Church by the will of Christ, its head, through His Apostles, is the special instrumentality for church-extension until the whole world has had the witness-bearing. The commission (as is true of other Scriptures) does not teach that all the world will be won to the faith, but the command is to give the world the gospel. So the promises to Abraham were and are to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Rule of study important—The true appeal—Water in the Old Testament. Lydia—The Philippian jailer—A modern jailer—Receiving converts. Stephanus—"oikos"—Adults in Christian families: None baptized who had Christian parents—Records of Baptisms—"Buried with Christ." Danger in adding to Scripture—Baptism "for the dead"—Criticism on the "Apostolic Creed"—Note: The "Burial" of Jesus. (For the baptism of Jesus, see Chapter XXXV.)

BAPTISM comes into our studies as the token of the covenant for the Church among the Gentiles. In this chapter the mode of administering the rite is not to be considered. It will come in further on; and the law of our studies will be rigidly adhered to—the Word of God as the exclusive source of information.

In the preceding chapter we spoke of the use of water under the Old Dispensation; and this also (as to mode) is to be studied hereafter. We only repeat here, that it could not have belonged to the covenant of the Church; for no reference to any use of water was made in arranging the covenant and its duties. Again: Water was to be used many times by the same person, in ceremonial law-cleansings; but no such law was given for the token of the covenant, either before or after the change of form for the Gentiles. To make the Old Dispensation use of water the same in meaning with the rite which was given to accompany church-extension, would be to say that baptism should be administered as often as we fall into sin. This, none of the "churches" hold; and it is not parallel with the one reception of the token before the new form was given.

We read of a baptism administered by Jesus, before His institution of the rite in Matthew xxviii. In John iv, 1, 2, the record is: "The Pharisees heard that Jesus made

and baptized more disciples than John; though Jesus baptized not, but his disciples." Whether the report was true or not, we see that Jesus, himself, did not perform that rite. He is nowhere spoken of as baptizing with water. The above explanation applies also to the record in John iii, 22. Jesus may have superintended the baptizings done by His disciples; and their work may have been ascribed to Him. We suppose that the disciples continued the interrupted work of John the Baptist; for the New Dispensation had not begun. (See our Chapter XXXII.) Until it did begin, there was no place for the rite which was sent to the heathen nations. The disciples were then working within Israelitish bounds, and were limited to them. Matthew x, 6; xv, 24.

In our Chapter XIX, the present study was before us in part; but here, the subject comes in a more practical form.

The baptism of Lydia and her household is recorded in Acts xvi, 14, 15, as follows: "And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul; and when she was baptized and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." [Note: Lydia was a resident, perhaps a native, of Philippi where this scene is laid. She was a seller of the purple made in Thyatira, a city of Asia Minor, famed for the manufacture of that goods, and where the art of dyeing was extensively cultivated.] Lydia's conversion was evidently to faith in Jesus as the Christ. We make a careful study of her case.

I. The Lord opened her heart to accept Jesus as the Christ. That was the theme of Paul's preaching continually.

II. She claimed faith for herself, only, and the record mentions no heart opened but hers. There is no hint of faith exercised by any others in her household.

III. Upon her confession of her own faith she was baptized. The record plainly teaches that she did so confess.

IV. Though not one of her household is mentioned, or even remotely referred to as exercising faith, or as even attending the services, yet all the "household" was baptized.

Was that done under the principles of the constitution of the Church, as organized with the "household" of Abraham? Certainly there is, as we may say, a perfect similarity in what was done in the two households. This is the more clearly seen in the following object-lesson:

ABRAHAM.	LYDIA.
Was a believer.	Was a believer.
As a believer, he was circumcised. (The original token of the covenant for Israel.)	As a believer, she was baptized. (The changed form of the token for Gentiles.)
No hint of faith in his "household."	No hint of faith in her "household."
Yet when he was circumcised, his "household" was also circumcised. (The token was then confined to males.)	Yet when she was baptized, her "household" was also baptized. (All limitations of sex, were removed, for the New Dispensation, Romans iv; Galatians iii.)

A like comparison is easily made in the case of the Philippian jailer, by substituting his name (or title, "jailer,") for the name, "Lydia."

The manner of receiving converts was unlike that now prevailing, if we may judge from the records. It seems that when and where the preacher won a soul to the faith, then and there the baptism was administered. We find no instance where members were received into the Church by a court or congregation of the brethren. The baptism so far as appearances go, was an act of the preacher, and by

its administration the convert was recognized as having become a member of God's covenanted Church; then his or her household was admitted to baptism, if the convert was the head of a family. Such are the indications in the history set forth in this chapter. The reception by baptism is on record as a personal, ministerial act.

The history of the Philippian jailer and his household was repeated, within our knowledge, a few years since. A jailer and his wife confessed faith in Christ, and desired to be received into the communion of the Church. Whereupon the pastor of the local church (the Rev. William C. White, Warm Springs, Virginia,) went to the jailer's house, accompanied by an elder of his church. These two received confession of faith from this jailer and his wife, and the preacher administered baptism to them and their children. Was that a Scriptural proceeding, or not? When the action was reported to the Presbytery, exception was taken to it, as "irregular," but it was allowed to stand as valid. Now in this case there were as many church officers present as when the Philippian jailer and household were baptized, and one more than in the reception of the Samaritans, in whose case only Philip seems to have acted; and that Philip was not an Apostle, but a simple preacher of the gospel. Did not our Brother White conform to Scriptural law and precedent, as on record?

We see that Abraham and household, even to the infant of eight days, were admitted to the covenant-token when only his faith is mentioned; and there can be no doubt as to the child's representation in the believing parent. That was according to God's own idea of His Church, at that time. The one question is: Did He change His idea? Every record which we can find says that He did not. There is nothing, anywhere in the Bible, contrary to the constitution framed and delivered in Genesis xvii. But all after-teachings bind the Church to the principles of that organization; and Abraham, as we have repeatedly seen, is announced to be "the father of us all, before God," though

we be of the Gentiles. And from the face of the records in the Book of Acts, we have every reason to say that the New Testament preachers worked under the same principles which were established in the organization of the Church in the household of Abraham. Their action, as recorded, in the cases of Lydia and the Philippian jailer, was precisely according to God's dictation to Abraham, with the one exception that the limitation to sex was absent, and as we have shown, that was abolished under the New Dispensation. We take the cases just as they stand in the Word of God, neither adding nor subtracting anything.

As were Cornelius and the Eunuch, so was Lydia, a Gentile who worshiped God as known to Israel. Knowing the invariable theme of Paul's preaching (see Galatians vi, 14), when we read that "she attended to the things spoken by Paul," and that the Lord opened her heart to do so, we can safely say that she was converted to faith in Jesus as the Christ. But the jailer was not, as was Lydia, a worshiper of God. He was a new convert from heathenism. Compare Acts x, 1, 2, and viii, 27–35.

But what is meant by Lydia's "household"? In Acts xi, 14, Peter says that his mission was to Cornelius and all his "(οἶκος—oikos) house." Of course we know that he meant the family of Cornelius, and not the building in which he lived. So in Acts xvi, 33, 34, the believing jailer and "all his" were baptized, when only he is said to have believed. In Verse 34, the translation reads: "And when he had brought them into his (οἶκον—oikon), house (residence), he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." The word (πανοικὶ—panoiki) translated "house," at the end of this verse, means "whole household, or family." But who composed the family? The records do not say. Only this is declared, That the jailer believed. No one else is said to have done so. Yet all were baptized. Did others believe, or may we infer that? A literal translation of the Greek is: "He exulted with all his family, (he) having believed in God." So the faith was

exercised by him, only, according to the Spirit's words, and when he openly manifested his joy, it was only natural that all his family should sympathize with him in it. The record allows us to say nothing more. For aught we know, others of the family may have been old enough to believe and may have done so; but the record does not allow us to assert that. In 1 Corinthians i, 16, Paul speaks of baptizing the (oikos) household of Stephanus. And who was he? That epistle was addressed to "The Church of God which is at Corinth; to them that are (ἁγιασμενοις—hagiosmenois, that is, separated; consecrated) sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all those calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place." (See Greek.) Plainly, then it was written to adult professors of the faith who could "call on the name of Christ" as believers. The second epistle, written for the same church, is addressed "To the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia." It cannot, therefore, be doubted that professing adults were meant. Now, in reproving the church at Corinth for attempts at divisions, Paul says, Verse 14, "I baptized none of you (ei–mê) excepting Crispus and Gaius." Evidently the pronoun "you," refers to the adult professors to whom the epistles were addressed, including Crispus and Gaius. Therefore, the meaning is, "I baptized none of you adult believers, except Crispus and Gaius." What, then does Verse 16, mean? There Paul says: "And I baptized also the (oikon) household of Stephanus." Did that include Stephanus, the head of the family, as in the cases of Lydia and the jailer? There is no other record showing when he was baptized. The baptism of two adults is mentioned in Verse 14; but in this Verse 16, "the household of Stephanus" is added, which makes a contrast in the two baptizings. It seems to say that the baptism of the household of Stephanus was extra to the two adult cases mentioned. The word "oikos," as used in the New Testament, generally applies to the family proper, including the children. It is so in 1 Timothy iii, 4, 5, which teaches that the (episkopos)

overseer, or bishop of Verse 2, must be "one that ruleth well his own (okios) house, having his children in (ὑποταγῃ, hupotagê) subordination, with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own (oikos) house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" In 1 Timothy v, 14, "oikos" is in combination with δεσποτης—(despotês), as οικοδεσποτεω (oikodespoteō), meaning to rule, or govern the children who are mentioned in that verse. It teaches that mothers, having young children, must train them properly. There is no difficulty in understanding when the word applies to the family. As Paul put the "okios" of Stephanus in contrast with the two adults whom he baptized, we apply previous findings as to the constitutional principles of church-extension, and conclude that the "household of Stephanus" was, as that of Lydia, or of the jailer. In 1 Corinthians xvi, 15, Paul called the household of Stephanus, "oikia," which means "house, dwelling," and also, "the family or household of persons," including guests, servants, etc. He says that the "oikia" of Stephanus devoted themselves to the service of the saints. We see nothing contrary to foregoing records; for all, even children, led by older members of the family, could, and have been often known to do such service though not believers. But it was the "oikos," not the "oikia," which Paul baptized.

In the course of these studies we verify a fact, mentioned by other writers: That *not one record indicates, even remotely, the baptism of any adult whose parents were Christians when he was a child!* All the baptisms of adults were in families into which the gospel was being introduced for the first time. Believing adults are mentioned as baptized; but not one was of a previously Christian family. Yet, during the about thirty years covered by Apostolic work, and the history in the Book of Acts, there was more than enough time for infants, born near the Pentecost of Acts ii, to grow to adult age. A child born about the date of that Pentecost would have been fully thirty years of age, when

that history ended; and would not some, of the many thousands, be reached by the gospel? The preachers were going everywhere, winning and baptizing converts among the Gentiles; yet there is the fact, that not one adult is mentioned as baptized, whose parents were of the Church when he was a child. What can we conclude but that the work of church-extension was prosecuted under the unchanged constitution of the Church as given in the covenant with Abraham? Many parents were converted to the faith within a short time after that Pentecost; and why were none of their children baptized after attaining adult age? We cannot account for this, except as above. The fact here mentioned, has often impressed us during these studies.

So far as deemed needful we now mention recorded instances of baptisms:

I. Mark xvi, 16: (A disputed passage) "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." This, as before explained, bears upon the introduction of the gospel and the organization of the Church among the heathen. Every new organization had to begin, as at first (Genesis xvii), with one or more who believed.

II. Acts viii: Baptism of Samaritans and the Eunuch; all Gentiles. (See our Chapter XXXIII.)

III. Acts x, 47, 48: Baptism of Cornelius, etc., Gentiles.

IV. Acts xviii, 8; xix, 3–5: Records of Gentiles baptized.

V. Romans vi, 3, 4; Colossians ii, 12: (See latter part of our Chapter X.) Baptism into the death of Christ; a baptism which saves by uniting to Him in His atonement, from crucifixion to resurrection from death; a baptism which does not *follow*, but *causes* faith and new life. It brings the sinner into saving connection with the atoning work of Christ, Romans vi, 6, and is the equivalent of the spiritual circumcision of Colossians ii, 11, "in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh"; and Romans vi, 6, the

crucifixion of "our old man" with Christ "that the body of sin might be destroyed." It is the quickening "together with" Christ, Colossians ii, 13; the "συμφυτοι (sumphutoi) growing together; conjoining in the likeness of his death," Romans vi, 5, which secures forgiveness of "all trespasses," Colossians ii, 13, and raises from death in sin to the salvation secured in Christ's resurrection.

Here we once more call attention to the fact, which every reader of the Bible may see for himself, that the mention of baptism in the holy records does not always mean the rite in which water is used. The connections of the word, where it is used, are to be noticed and studied if we would understand. Thus only will this baptism of Romans vi and Colossians ii be rightly interpreted. Look at the *results* of it! Then, calmly and truly say whether any such can follow baptism with water. The Scriptures ascribe such results to the ministration of the Holy Spirit only. We know that He baptizes, Acts ii; x; xi; 1 Corinthians xii, etc. This, therefore, must be His saving baptism. In 1 Peter iii, 18, we read (see Greek): "Christ once for sins suffered (the) just for (the) unjust, that he might bring us to God; having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit." The latter clause means His resurrection from death by the power of God's Spirit. So our mortal bodies are quickened from the death in sin, given spiritual life, "by His Spirit that dwelleth in us," Romans viii, 11. Therefore, we yield our members as servants to righteousness unto holiness, (Romans vi, 19) after this spiritual baptism; for we are quickened, made alive, for the new life, and "walk in newness of life." We take "our members" away from the service of sin, and yield ourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead, Romans vi, 13. All this because through this baptism we died with Christ and are risen with Him to new life "through the faith of the operation of God who (Greek) raised him from the dead," Colossians ii, 12. If this were not a spiritual baptism, the spiritual circumcision of Colossians

ii, 11, could not be synonymous with it. No human hand touches the subjects in this circumcision, or in this baptism. It is "by the operation of God" only. In 1 Peter iii, 21, we read of a saving baptism which is not by any use of water as in cleansing the flesh, Peter explains; but which saves us "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." It gives us (see Greek) "the profession of upright consciousness towards God," and comes "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The same good conscience is mentioned in Verse 16. Peter and Paul were teaching the same doctrine. From the risen Saviour the saving baptism was poured out. The Holy Spirit was His resurrection gift. Peter uses an illustration, thus: As eight souls (persons) were saved from physical death by the waters of the flood bearing up Noah's ark, so is that a type of the real baptism which saves us, and which was secured and given by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In none of these chapters was the baptism with water meant. The burial, of Romans vi and Colossians ii, was not in water, nor in earth. It is not something to be done when we confess Christ; but it is something done to us by the Holy Spirit, causing us to confess Christ. In the Greek of both passages the past tense is used, and so is the translation in the New Version: "We were buried," etc. Nor is this a being baptized like unto the burial of Christ. No saving results are ever ascribed, in the Bible, to the burial of Jesus, nor to His resurrection from the grave. (See Note at the end of this chapter.)

VI. 1 Corinthians xii, 13: All of Christ's people baptized into one body by the one Spirit of God.

VII. 1 Corinthians xv, 29: A baptism "*ὑπερ* (huper) on account of the dead." The reference is to the old ceremonial purifications after contact with a dead body of any kind; see Numbers xix. Paul was using that as illustrative. The old rites of using water under the law were called "baptisms," in the Greek of Hebrews ix, 10. The Greek word there translated "washings" is *βαπτισμοις* (baptismois). Among the old rites was baptism on account of having

touched any dead thing, which was reckoned as a ceremonial defilement. Paul was a master of ecclesiastical law, "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught (*κατα ακριβειαν του πατρωου νομον*—kata akribeian tou patrōou nomon) conformably to accuracy of the ancestral law," Acts xxii, 3; v, 34. As did others, so did he frequently illustrate his teachings by the old law customs. There was a synagogue at Corinth where he was teaching (Acts xviii), and so he would have an audience of Jews who could appreciate his law figures. In 1 Corinthians xv, is his great argument for the resurrection of the dead, and for our hope of resurrection through the rising of Christ, Verse 20. Under Mosaism, death was the visible and sensible illustration of sin's power to pollute and destroy. The heathen, having no revelation of hope beyond death, expressed their despair by cuttings in their flesh, and by sundry idolatrous practices. God's people were not to copy those ways and abominations, Leviticus xix 28; but they were to cleanse their bodies ceremonially, and so express their faith in God as "the God of the living" for whose service their bodies were to be kept pure, Matthew xxii, 32; 1 Corinthians vi, 20. Paul taught, in substance: If there is no truth in resurrection, then no matter about our bodies. What difference can defilement make? If God cares nothing for them, so that He will leave them to perish forever at death, why take any pains to keep them holy for His service? In accord with this, we once heard a change suggested for the punctuation of 1 Corinthians xv, 32, thus: "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me? If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." The idea is: Make the most of worldly good for the body while you live, for there is no hereafter for it. But from God's illustrated care for the bodies of His people, as seen in the old ceremonial cleansings, Paul argued their future good in resurrection.

VIII. In Matthew xx, 22; Mark x, 38, our Lord's condition of suffering is spoken of as a "baptism." (For the baptism of Jesus, see our Chapter XXXV.)

IX. Ephesians iv, 5: The "one baptism." Compare 1 Corinthians xii, 13.

X. 1 Corinthians x, 2: Israel, being divinely put into a condition of dependence upon and subjection to Moses, in connection with the events occurring in leaving Egypt, was said to have been "baptized unto him."

We do not think that further examination can be necessary or profitable. We have sufficient proof that the word "baptize" is used in several senses in the Bible. Its chief use is in connection with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the results of His infusion of newness of spiritual life into the Church, and into the believer, individually. His baptism is not *regeneration*, whereby those actually "dead in trespasses and in sins" are made alive; but it is known in the enlightenment and revival of believers. That the "three thousand" of Acts ii could receive it is explained in the fact that they were already real though erring believers in the Christ. The Spirit-baptism enlightened and freed them.

The rite of baptism declares a condition of separation, consecration, dedication to the service of God. The confession of faith acknowledges the obligation to be the Lord's, and assumes the duties of His service.

A result of our studies, as represented in this chapter and in the "Note" which follows, is the rejection of two expressions in what is called, "The Apostles' Creed"—a document of uncertain date and origin, and of no divine authority. On these grounds, and for the last reason in particular, we wish to criticise and condemn two sections of it.

I. That our Lord was "buried," in the general understanding of that term. (See Note at end of chapter.)

II. That "he descended into hell," as the word "hell," is understood.

The accepted meaning is "the place of lost souls"—as the Greek word γέεννα (gehenna) means. He entered into the condition, or state of the dead; but He did not enter

"gehenna"—the real hell. That assertion in the "Creed" is both un-Scriptural and injurious. Doubtless its foundation is in an erroneous interpretation of 1 Peter iii, 18–20, which reads as follows: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." This passage is often read as meaning that Christ entered, or (in the language of the Creed) "descended into hell" after His death, and "preached" then and there to the lost souls. However laudable and merciful such a proceeding may appear to sympathetic human nature, there is no such idea taught in the Word of God. Never did, nor would He disparage the force of His gospel-teachings and warnings, by suggesting the possibility of a gospel preached in hell! Peter's teaching is:

1. Christ died for our sins; but was raised again to life by the Holy Spirit.

2. "By which (Spirit), also, He went (in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing) and preached unto the spirits (who, at the time when Peter wrote his epistle, were) in prison."

The time of their disobedience was, "when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." And *at that time*, Christ preached to them *through the agency of the Holy Spirit* who afterwards raised Him from the dead. The human agent used by the Spirit was Noah who, in 2 Peter ii, 5, is called "a preacher of righteousness." The record in Genesis vi, 3, shows that the spirit had been striving with the people of that time, and that their day of grace was almost ended. This passage, rightly interpreted, does not authorize the assertion in the Creed; nor is there any other Scripture for it. If the Church persists in using that Creed, it should be corrected

and made to speak according to truth. Holy associations may lead to an education in error. *Words are teachers!*

The Note following this chapter is nearly as long as the chapter itself; but we prefer to give the subject a separate and full treatment apart from all else. Some repetitions will be found in it, of the studies of this chapter, but we leave them as emphasis upon exceedingly important points.

NOTE ON THE BURIAL OF JESUS.

We add this note as a thorough examination of this subject; and we beg that the reader will notice the exact form of the question to be studied: *In our understanding and use of the word, was Jesus actually "buried"?* In other words, *did the disciples consider the body as finally disposed of*, when they laid it in the sepulchre? This may seem a strange question, but after critical, and we may say, exhaustive, examination of the records, we must answer it in the negative. Now let no one start back from this, as if it were heterodoxy, but master and keep in mind the precise form of the question so that its discussion will be appreciated. There may be unwillingness to study it at all; for the Church has been educated to regard the "burial" of Jesus, and His resurrection from "burial," as a doctrine of first value. But we hold that there should not be objection to the examination, or re-examination of any doctrine. If we have the truth, it will thus be confirmed in our faith, but if there is any error, it may be discovered. Our proposition is this: *The Scriptures do not emphasize the burial of Jesus, nor give it the importance which is usually attached to it.* And now, What is truth? The *death* of Jesus and His resurrection from *death*, is the great and vital doctrine of the Bible. Yet we are prone to attach as much importance to the resurrection from burial. But let this be realized: The Bible does not, even once, teach of any part of our salvation as depending upon Christ's burial and resurrection from burial. The whole hope is made to hinge upon His death and resurrection from death. This is the fact of the records. See such passages as Luke xxiv, 46; Acts iii, 15; iv, 10; v, 30; x, 39–41; xiii, 29–34; xvii, 31; Romans iv, 24, 25; vi, 9; vii, 4; viii, 11; x, 9; 2 Timothy ii, 8; 1 Peter i, 21, etc. As here, so everywhere. Fix this fact, for so it is, well in the mind. And another thing to be fully grasped is this: Had our Lord come to life while yet on the cross, or before being laid in the sepulchre, our salvation would then have been absolutely perfect.

It was not at all necessary that He should be laid in the sepulchre, in order to rise from the dead; and nothing depended upon His burial and resurrection from burial. True, we read in Isaiah liii, 9 (A. V.), "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death." The word translated "grave" is קֶבֶר (qeber), which means "burial place,"

etc. It may only indicate the place where He was temporarily laid. The verb translated "made," is נָתַן (näthan), meaning to "appoint, give," etc. Some renderings of this passage—which we give as a matter of interest—do not represent it as telling what our Lord did, but what the intentions of His crucifiers were. They intended that His grave, as was His death, should be with the wicked. It was the plan of His friend, the rich Joseph, to give Him honorable burial. The readings are as follows: "And they assigned him his grave with sinners, and with a rich man in his martyrdom, though he had done no wrong." (Delitzsch & Martin.) "They appointed him his grave with criminals," etc. (Calkins.) "And he gave with the wicked (men) his grave," etc. (Ad. Alexander.) Unwittingly His enemies fulfilled this prophecy, in intending to have Him buried as a malefactor, and His friend did likewise in intending Him honorable burial. If we take Dr. Alexander's rendering, it only amounts to this: That our Lord voluntarily gave himself up to the will of His enemies, as He taught in John x, 18.

But where is the prophecy of His burial and resurrection from burial? We learn, from Acts xiii, 29, that all prophecies had been fulfilled, in fact, when (before) the body was taken from the cross. Thus: "And when they (τελειοω—teleioō—to execute fully; finish fully) had fully executed all that was written (or prophesied) of him, they took (him) down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre." And, Verse 30, "But God raised him from the dead,"—not from burial. There is the record. Is it true, or not? Did, or did not Paul know? If all that was prophesied of Him "was fully finished" *before they took Him from the cross*, then the prophesied *intentions* of His enemies (to bury Him) were not accomplished, though the intentions actually existed. His actual burial was not prophesied; but, as prophesied, His body was given to "a rich man in his death;" and was raised from death. Then, what is the meaning of putting the body in a sepulchre? We appeal to facts for the answer, without addition or subtraction. Now facts are positive. We cannot argue with them, nor ignore them. When once ascertained, everything else, no matter what its seeming, must be interpreted to agree with them. We say, just here, that our proposition is not at all intended as antagonism to the "Creeds," but it is advanced only as the truth, which we believe we have discerned, in the records. We realize that it is a serious thing to go contrary to what has always been held as the plain doctrine of the Bible, and we esteem it unpardonably wrong to do such a thing in willfulness or carelessly. But the subjecting of any opinion or dogma of men to the most severe testing by Scriptural examination is a right which none but a bigot will question. Such an examination is all that is here intended. "*I know*," and "*I have always so believed*," may be the expressions of confidence or prejudice, but they are not guarantees of truth, because boldly made. Of the question before us, as of every other, we say: Let it be decided according to the facts as given by the Holy Spirit; and let all else be ignored. What are the facts?

I. Our Lord's body was taken from the cross, on the day of His crucifixion, at a very late hour. The day was just closing. In Luke xxiii, 54, we read: "And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on." The Jewish Sabbath began at sunset of (our) Friday. It was "the ninth hour before Jesus died (Mark xv, 34), and how much more time elapsed, after this 3 o'clock, until He died, cannot be known. But from Verse 34 to Verse 37, may have been one, or two, or three hours. In Matthew xxvii, 57, and Mark xv, 42, we read: "The even was come." Thus a very short time remained for action, if the disciples would avoid trespassing on the holy day; and the law against such trespass was exceedingly strict. In Mark xv, 43, we see that a part of that brief time was consumed in seeking for Pilate's consent to possess the body, and yet more in waiting until he could assure himself of the fact of death. After this, Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus from the cross, and (Mark xv, 46), "bought fine linen * * * and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock; (or as we read in Luke xxiii, 53, "a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid,") and rolled a stone unto the door." In Mark xvi, 5; Luke xxiv, 3, 4; John xx, 1–8, we learn that this was a room of such dimensions that several persons could stand together in it. In John xix, 31, is the reason for haste in taking the body from the cross. It was unlawful to leave it on the cross during the Sabbath day, therefore, the disciples had to find a place, very quickly, in which to deposit the body. Evidently they only had time to remove it hastily, and bestow it somewhere until after the Sabbath. Joseph's new tomb, close at hand, was offered, and (Verse 42) "there laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews preparation; for the sepulchre was nigh." Two reasons: 1. Verse 41: It was an undefiled sepulchre. 2. Verse 42: It was near at hand. It offered as a convenient and clean keeping-room for the body, until the Sabbath was past.

II. The common version says that what was done to the body, before it was laid in the sepulchre, was "as the manner of the Jews is to bury." But the Greek word here used (ενταφιαζειν—entaphiazein) is properly translated by "prepare for burial." Therefore, the correct reading is: "as the manner of the Jews is to prepare for burial." This sets the matter in a new light. This is the only place where that form of the word is found, and we think the fact significant. In Mark xiv, 8 and John xii, 7, we read of two women who anointed the head and feet of Jesus. Of one He said: "She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying." Of the other He said: "Against the day of my burying hath she kept this." Doubtless they intended to do a special honor to our Lord; but we think that He put a meaning of His own upon the acts; for His disciples were notoriously blind and slow of understanding in all that pertained to His death. Be that as it may, the word used is ενταφιασμον (entaphiasmon), and has about the same meaning as that noticed above. We take the meaning to be: "She hath done this as a preparation for my burial"; for He knew that they would intend to bury Him when He should die.

Actual burials are expressed in Matthew viii, 22, and Luke ix, 59, 60 by θαψαι (thapsai); in Matthew xiv, 12 by εθαψαν (ethapsan); in Matthew xxvii, 7 by ταφην (taphēn); in Luke xvi, 22 by εταφη (etaphē); in Acts v, 6, 10 by εθαψαν (ethapsan); and in Verse 9 by θαψαντων (thapsantōn). Only in 1 Corinthians xv, 4, is "etaphē"—the burial-word of Luke xvi, 22, Acts ii, 29,—used in speaking of our Lord. It is from θαπτω (thaptō), which means "to pay the last dues to a corpse." It has a wide range—expressing either the preparation for burial, or the actual burial. The Verses, 3 and 4, read thus: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Notice a difference in the wording. The phrase "according to the Scriptures" is not used with the word "buried"; but only in connection with Christ's death and resurrection from death. Is there not some significance in that omission? Could it have been accidental? Would that exact and inspired theologian, Paul, have been so careless as to omit the words in that place, if the burial and resurrection from burial was an essential doctrine? He was careful to say: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; * * * and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures"; but he did not say that "He was buried according to the Scriptures." Now we can find—what Paul knew—abundant prophecies that our Lord was to die, and rise from the dead, but none as to His burial and resurrection from burial. The one place in the New Testament which seems to countenance the idea of His actual burial is in 1 Corinthians xv, 4; yet in that passage is no real proof, as the word "thaptō" is fully satisfied in being translated "prepared for burial," if there are no reasons for rendering it otherwise. As we understand, the facts warrant the translation "prepared for burial"; and so we think Paul's language should be understood. There are many words whose translation must be decided by circumstances and facts, or the Scriptures will not be rightly interpreted. In our use and understanding of the word "buried," the body is finally disposed of in the grave, and we expect to leave it there without further molestation. Our ministry to it is done, and it has passed out of our further handling. Does this meaning apply here? In John xix, 41, 42, we read: "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore," etc. Why?

(*a.*) "Because of the Jews' preparation." The Sabbath was being prepared for, as it was very near. Therefore, haste was necessary.

(*b.*) Because the sepulchre was "nigh at hand." They used it under pressure of circumstances for keeping the body until opportunity offered for final burial, which they intended. It was the nearest place at their command, for safe-keeping until after the Sabbath.

Then having closed the entrance with a large stone, for protection, they returned to their homes and (Luke xxiii, 56.) "prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Does not that preparation of "spices and ointments" show that they did not

regard the body as finally disposed of? Therefore, at dawn of the morning after the Sabbath, they hastened to the sepulchre, "bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others (of the disciples) with them." How many came, we do not know, but the words show that there were more than the two or three women who are usually supposed to have made up the company. We cannot regard this as a mere visit of sympathy, or love, such as is customary with us for the purpose of laying flowers on the graves of our dead. Their purpose is definitely explained in the words: "That they might come and anoint him." Clearly, it was to complete the preparations for burial which were begun, but interrupted, when the body was taken from the cross. So it would seem to any whose ideas had not been directed otherwise. Partial preparation for burial had been made by Nicodemus, but it was too late in the afternoon to finish the work. Therefore, after laying the body in a safe place, they went home, prepared the materials during the evening, then returned to the body at the earliest lawful hour, that they might finish the interrupted ministrations to it. This does not look at all as if they considered it as finally disposed of. Each writer says it was "laid" in the sepulchre; and not one speaks of it as if finally buried. Those who came, after the Sabbath, did not come as to a finally-closed tomb, but with the evident expectation and intention of entering the sepulchre so as to complete their burial ministrations. The final rite of closing it and leaving the body in its keeping had not been performed. But, to their amazement, the body was gone! They had forgotten the resurrection promise! Such are the facts. Do they not sustain our proposition? But why attach importance to this matter? We are not indulging a spirit of hypercriticism. But in our view, two important points are involved:

I. *A right understanding of the Scriptures.*

The great doctrine—without which is no hope of salvation—is: *The atoning death* of Christ and His triumphal resurrection from that death. Change this; take from it, add to it, and our faith is imperiled. Here is the chief corner-stone of the one foundation upon which our hope rests, and nothing should be allowed to mar the real form of this essential doctrine. But exaltation of the burial idea, to the place of a cardinal doctrine, *has* marred its form and wrought much evil. It has caused misuse of the Scriptures; engendered bitter controversy, and (in a measure) drawn faith away from an entire reliance upon the atoning death and justifying righteousness of our Lord. No one, who is intelligently observant, can have failed to see that among many thousands there is a tendency to rely upon hope based in the outward conformity of a baptism which professes to imitate the (supposed) burial of Christ and His resurrection from that burial. Surely it cannot be denied that many have founded and do found their hope, of entire acceptance with God, upon such conformity, regarding it as an act of obedience to the law of Christ. It is especially true of the more illiterate classes. And this has now and then gone so far—as our own eyes have seen and our own ears have heard—that those failing to obey this interpretation of the Scriptures have been threatened with a cutting off from the hope of salvation. If this is a serious saying, it is also the truth! What is the remedy?

The Church must show no mercy to this error; but realize and faithfully teach of the *death* of Christ and His resurrection from death *as the doctrine of saving truth*. What results from exaltation of the burial idea, is a disparagement and weakening of the real doctrine of salvation. The addition is in no wise needed, nor is it Scriptural. The benefits of the purchased redemption are ours through the "one baptism"—that act of the Holy Spirit (so represented in Romans vi and Colossians ii) whereby He so unites to Christ in His perfected atonement that we are accounted as having lived, suffered, died, and risen from death in and with Him. This is the "all and in all" of our hope. The doctrine is stated as follows:

Romans vi, 3, 4 (See Greek): "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death; that (ὥσπερ—hōsper) as Christ was raised from the dead (διὰ της δοξης—dia tês doxês) through the honor of the Father, so also we in newness of life should walk."

Colossians ii, 11, 12 (See Greek): "In whom also ye were circumcised with circumcision not made by hand, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in the baptism, in which also ye were raised with (him) through the faithfulness of the working of God who raised him from the dead."

1 Peter iii, 21: "The like figure whereunto baptism doth now also save us [not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but (επερωτημα, eperōtêma) profession of good conscience (eis) to God] (dia) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The words enclosed in brackets explain positively that the use of water, in baptism, was not at all meant. It is as if Peter had said: "I am not speaking of the baptism with water, but of that baptism which saves us and which is symbolized in the baptism with water. I mean that baptism which was bestowed upon us by the risen Saviour—the baptism with the Holy Spirit obtained through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." His illustration (Verse 20) was of "eight souls (persons) saved by water." As the water of the flood bore up those "eight souls" above the ruin of a perished world, so the baptism "with the Holy Spirit"—the resurrection-gift of Jesus Christ—raises us up above the wrecking of a sin-lost world.

That any interpretation is wrong which makes the above passages mean a baptism with water, is seen as follows:

(*a.*) All the Scriptures ascribe spiritual quickening, of those dead in trespasses and sins, to the Holy Spirit alone. In John vi, 63, Jesus said: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." There is no departure from this doctrine.

(*aa.*) If the matter is brought to a practical test, the universal finding is that a baptism with water has no saving results. Therefore, if there is a baptism which saves, it must be that "with the Holy Spirit." Then if this is the only baptism which saves, it is the only baptism of which Peter was speaking.

As to the above passages, it is not only true that in neither of them is the real burial-word used (in Romans vi, it is συνταφημεν—suntaphêmen,

and in Colossians ii, it is συνταφεντες—suntaphentes), but the baptism there spoken of is not into the "burial of Christ," but "into His death." As His atoning death was the sum and climax of His atoning work, so (Colossians ii, 10,) we are made "complete in him" through that baptism. By the quickening of the Holy Spirit we, who were once alive to and servants of sin, were "crucified with Christ," that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should no longer serve sin. We were made alive from that spiritual death, and raised up to new life as Christ was raised from the dead; and in each case the raising up was by the Holy Spirit, Romans viii, 11. Thus the "honor" of God was maintained in the fulfillment of His promises to Christ, Psalms xvi, 10; Acts ii, 30, 31. The saving union is taught in Romans vi, 5, thus: "For if (συμφυτοι γεγοναμεν—sumphutoi gegonamen) united together we have become in the likeness of his death, we shall be also of his resurrection."

In Verse 8 (See Greek), "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." Thus His death and resurrection from death, are everywhere recognized as the vital doctrine; and our part in both is through the baptism with the Holy Spirit. But no such stress is put upon His burial and resurrection from burial; and we are not taught that we have any interest in these. For our salvation, we owe nothing to the burial idea. Why, then, use the word "buried"? The answer is in the very language of these passages. But we reply: When death occurs, we bury our dead out of our sight and life-sphere. So of our relation and attitude to our old sin-life, in which we were before the Holy Spirit quickened us by baptizing us into the atoning death of Christ. The body of sin—"our old man"—was killed—made dead—in our crucifixion with Christ. Now it is no more to rule our lives, but is to be as a dead and buried thing to us. Paul expressed this doctrine in another form in Galatians vi, 14.

Because in accepting Christ we died to and for sin in Him, therefore, we read in Romans vi, 10, 11: "For in that he died, he died unto sin (εφαπαξ, ephapax) once for all; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. (ὁυτως και—houtōs kai.) So also ye reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

II. The second reason involves the doctrine of the "redemption of the body," Romans viii, 23.

All know that many of Christ's people never had—never will have any burial. Their bodies were destroyed by fire or drowned in water—Christ's precious martyrs—and in other ways they perished. Some died—God only knows where and how! Now if there is any part of salvation in being joined to Christ by any likeness to Him in His *burial* and resurrection from *burial*, then such as they are losers by so much. But when we take the actual teachings of the Bible—a whole salvation for the whole man through Christ's death and resurrection from death—all have a perfect and equal hope, even those who never had the poor charity of a burial. The idea (and perhaps some hold it) of a saving benefit in Christ's burial and resurrection from burial, not only restricts the fullness of His salvation to a

limited number of His people (those, only, who had or have burial)—when all belongs to all—but it is not so a Scriptural idea that it should be insisted upon and grafted among the articles of orthodoxy. And if the term "burial" is to be retained and used, it should not have the prominent place now accorded to it, to the disparagement of the absolutely vital doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection from death.

But yet more certainty develops in a constrast of the records of actual, final burials, and the disposition made of our Lord's body. See Matthew viii, 21, 22: "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father;" also Luke ix, 59, 60. Matthew xiv, 12: John's disciples buried his body. Matthew xxvii, 7: The potter's field bought to bury strangers in. Luke xvi, 22: The rich man died, "and was buried." Acts ii, 29: David, dead and buried. Acts v, 6–10: Ananias and Sapphira buried.

In such words is not the remotest reason for doubt as to the meaning. Here are cases of actual burial, proved in the evident intentions and acts as to the final disposition of the dead. There is not the shadow of an indication that the actors, in the funeral rites, had any thought of doing more to the dead. They buried them and left them.

Now, look at the records about our Lord's body. These show clear intention on the part of His disciples, to minister yet further, after placing His body in the sepulchre. See Matthew xxvii, 60; Luke xxiii, 53; John xix, 42.

In these passages the body is not spoken of, at all, as buried; but it was "(εθηκεν—ethêken) placed." The word is from "τιθημι (tithêmi)—to place, set, lay, deposit," etc. It does not mean, in any case, "to bury," as this term is understood. Luke xxiii, 55: The women "followed after, and beheld the sepulchre (και ὡς ετεθη το σωμα αυτου—kai hōs etethê to sōma autou) and how his body was laid." Mark xv, 46: Κατεθηκεν (Katethêken)—placed in the sepulchre. The angel seen at the sepulchre said, Matthew xxviii, 6: "Come, see the place where (εκειτο, ekeito) was lying the Lord." Mark xvi, 6: "Behold the place where (εθηκαν—ethêkan) they placed him" (or, "put him"). John xx, 2, 13: Mary Magdalene said: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where (εθηκαν—ethêkan) they have put him." John xx, 12: The angels were sitting where the body of Jesus "ekeito—had lain."

Now notice other records: In Matthew xxvii, 57 and John xix, 38, Joseph is spoken of as one who had been discipled to Jesus. He already believed in the Christ, for (Mark xv, 43 and Luke xxiii, 50) we read that he was "also waiting for the kingdom of God," which was the coming of the Christ; Matthew iv, 2, 17, 23; Mark i, 14, 15, etc. This man, having begged for and obtained the body of Jesus, wrapped it in linen cloth—all four records say; Matthew xxvii, 59; Mark xv, 46; Luke xxiii, 53; John xix, 38–40. And John xix, 39 says that Nicodemus added "myrrh and aloes," just as we, now, use antiseptics about a dead body, in course of preparation for burial, to resist putrefaction until the burial can be performed. This was, as we have seen, "as the manner of the Jews is to

bury." Thus the body was to be kept until there was opportunity to complete the preparations and bury it.

In these historical records is not one word about an actual burying; but the word "buried" is *conspicuously absent.* The body is spoken of as being "placed" in the sepulchre, as we would put a body into a vacant room until ready to bury it. Place these records beside those already noted, showing that the disciples did not regard the burial as having been accomplished, and our proposition is fully sustained.

NOTE ON THE DURATION OF OUR LORD'S STAY IN THE SEPULCHRE.

Some contradiction of other records seems to appear in Matthew xii, 40; "As Jonas was three days and three nights in (κοιλια του κητους—koilia tou kêtous) the belly of the great fish, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The explanation is this: The Jews counted a day and a night together, as one period; and any portion of that period was counted in as the whole of it. Now, our Lord was "laid" in the sepulchre on (our) Friday evening. He "arose from the dead" on (our) Sunday morning. Therefore, the reckoning was thus:

I. Friday evening, being a part of the day, was counted as one day; and Friday night was one night. This period was called "one day and one night."

II. Saturday and Saturday night, making another period, were reckoned as another day and night. So we have "two days and two nights."

III. On (our) Sunday morning our Lord "rose from the dead." That morning, being a part of the period of morning and night, was reckoned as the third day and night, making the "three days and three nights" of the stay. Jesus spoke according to the Jewish mode of expressing time.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MODE OF BAPTISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Where to begin—No appeals to scholarship—Liquids in the Old Testament. "Water of purification" sprinkled—Old Testament baptisms, Hebrews ix, 10—Mode of John the Baptist—Did he change the mode?—Baptism not new to Jews—Moses and the "hyssop"—Mockings about use of "the hyssop."

EVERY intelligent student understands that the germs of the New Testament are in the Old Testament. Separate the two, and the Scriptures will not be properly studied and so, not truly known. Therefore, we begin our study of the mode of baptism in the Old Testament; and in examining this subject, we propose to ignore everything not directly furnished by our Divine source of information. The word *βαπτιζω* (Baptidsō) may be one thing or another in the hands of Greeks and lexicographers. It is a matter of no moment here. And, moreover, we find that they are not to be trusted as leaders in seeking the Lord's will. For example, take the Greek word *Δειπνον* (Deipnon). In the understanding of the world it means "a meal, chief meal of the day, dinner, a banquet, etc., often extending far into the night." But *in our Lord's use* it means nothing of the kind, as all who ever saw the Lord's Supper administered know. At that ordinance a morsel of bread and a sip of wine constitute a "deipnon"; but, so far as we can learn, no such meaning is given the word in any secular literature. Yet, for the Church, that is the right meaning; for it is the translation put upon that word by our Lord for His Church. His *actions translated it for His service!* And all the "churches" feel, as is evident in their custom, that they have no liberty to go outside the Lord's example in this matter. Should we follow Greeks and lexicons, as to this word, or even the general usage in the New Testament, we

would never do what our Lord did, nor according to His command in the administration of His Supper. God did not introduce rites into His service in their worldly use or meaning; but He gave to each a meaning of His own, explaining that either by words or actions, and it is for His Church to conform to His will as thus indicated. Independent of all the teachings or examples of men, what God gives is to be accepted and used as He gives it. Such is our understanding of duty in His service.

"Baptidsō" is a very old word, and, like circumcision, was in use long before our Lord called it into His service. Let the reader turn to our Chapter X and refresh his memory as to the propositions there written, for they apply in strictness to our present study. We have but one question before us here: How, or in what mode is the Church to use water in obeying the Lord's command to baptize?

Our search for the answer begins with God's earliest recorded commands for the use of liquids in His service. As preparatory to the anointing of the priests, He ordered them to be brought to "the door of the tabernacle of the congregation," and (רָחַץ rächats) "washed" with water, Exodus xxix, 4; xl, 12. Now it is nothing to us that men may say "so and so" of this word. How does God use it? A thorough examination of the Bible usage shows that it always meant the application of water to the person. We have examined every passage. It stands in contrast with כָּבַס (käbas), which applies to the washing of clothes, or other soiled articles. The action in this latter word, was to put the clothes into a vessel having water in it and tramp upon them with the feet. Such was the ordinary mode. As the word is used in the Bible we cannot say that the object of the ceremonial washing was to cleanse the clothes; for such washing was not intended for a literal, but a figurative cleansing; Genesis xlix, 11; Exodus xix, 10, 14; Leviticus xi, 25, 28, and so on to Numbers xxxi, 24. Four times the word is used for figurative, spiritual cleansing, without doubt: Jeremiah ii, 22; iv, 14; Psalms li, 2, 7

(Verses 4, 9, in Hebrew Bible). The contrasting word (rächats) means the application of water to the person, or to parts of it. In only one instance, Leviticus xv, 16, do we find it used for washing the whole body. There the addition of the words "all his flesh" shows that it was an exceptional case. In Job xxix, 6, this word is used in the sentence "I have washed my steps with butter." The idea is of smearing butter upon the feet, or steppings, as oil on machinery to cause frictionless running. For general use of the word see Genesis xviii, 4; xix, 2; xxiv, 32, and on to Exodus xl, 12, 31, 32; Leviticus i, 9, 13, on to xxii, 6; Numbers xix, 7, 8, 19; Deuteronomy xxi, 6; xxiii, 11 (Hebrew 12); Ruth iii, 3; 2 Samuel xii, 20, to Isaiah iv, 4. In the translation of Leviticus xv and xvi, where the two words "wash" and "bathe" occur, the word "bathe" is "rächats," applying to ceremonial cleansing of the person; and the word "wash" is "käbas," applying to ceremonial cleansing of the clothes. We gave the common use of the latter word a few sentences back; but we doubt if the action indicated there could always be performed, literally, in the almost countless ceremonial cleansings of the great hosts of Israel, involving, as it would, such stupendous labor and trouble and the use of such a vast quantity of water. This thought leads us to doubt that the command contemplated the washing of the person or clothes for the purpose of actual cleansing. The special uses of the two words—one applying to persons and the other to clothes—indicate that the action demanded by each was different. Those who know the old Hebrew way of washing the hands, or other parts of the person, are well aware that pouring the water was the common mode; 2 Kings iii, 11. In bathing, the water was generally applied to the person. In the translation of Leviticus xv, we read of bathing the flesh "*in* water." Those who know any Hebrew at all will see that the prefix to the Hebrew word for water is ב (bêth), which preposition has about as many different translations as the Greek "en." (See our Chapter XXIX.) It is translated as in,

with, among, on, after, at, by, etc., according to circumstances, and the mind of the translators. We cannot think that all persons in the multitudes of Israel's hosts were required to, literally, bathe "in" water every time they contracted ceremonial uncleanness. Indeed, on some occasions they were wanting in enough water to drink after the law was given at Mt. Sinai. Had the required bathing meant an actual submersion of the body, or even a going into the water, a great river flowing all along the length of the wilderness-journey would have been essential, or large pools scattered here and there at convenient distances. And after the settlement in Canaan there would have to be streams of size, convenient to every family, or large tanks of water at every house. But the bathing was not for the cleansing of the flesh. It was only a symbolic act which, as is evident, could be performed with a small quantity of water. In accord with this and proving the correctness of our conclusion, in Numbers xix, we read that the water was to be "sprinkled" in ceremonial cleansings. But let it be noticed and remembered, that in "răchats" the use of water *was not official*, but it was the private or personal act of the individual. The word for the *official* use of water, on the part of God's minister under the law, is נָזָה (näzä), and the right translation is "sprinkle," beyond question. (See our Chapter XXIX.) Officially, by priests or other law-designated persons, the anointing oil was poured upon the head, and in some cases, as in Leviticus xiv, 16, 27, it was sprinkled. Blood and water were sprinkled, Numbers xix, 4–13; 18–21.

In Leviticus xiv, the law for the ceremonial cleansing of the leper is found. One of two birds was to be killed in an earthen vessel, over running water. Then cedar-wood, scarlet, hyssop, and the living bird (Verse 6) were all to be "(טָבַל täbal) dipped" into the blood of the one dead bird; and the leper was to be sprinkled with that blood "seven times." The cedar-wood, scarlet, hyssop and the living bird were all to be dipped into the blood of that one dead

bird. How much blood would the one bird furnish? Most assuredly not enough for submerging the three things, besides another bird as large as itself! Therefore, we have a *fact*, namely: That "täbal" did not mean "dip" in the sense of submerge, or immerse; that is, the Scriptural use of the word does not call for a complete covering, or immersion; but its demand and intention in the Bible are fully met in a partial wetting of the thing "dipped." Clearly, the only purpose in that dipping was to get upon the things dipped a sufficient quantity of the liquid into which they were dipped, for sprinkling. The word here translated "sprinkle," is "näzä," Verses 7, 16, 27, 51. In Verse 51, where the house was to be cleansed, dipping in "running water" is added. Whatever the special formalities, it is plain that the leper was to be ceremonially cleansed by being sprinkled "seven times." Here, again, is a *fact*. In 2 Kings v, 10, we read that Naaman, the leper, was told to "rächats" himself in Jordan "seven times." At first he did not want to obey, but having been persuaded to compliance, by his servant, he varied from the prophet's directions, for, as we read, he chose to (täbal) dip himself in the river. That was not the prophet's command at all, Verses 10–14. If he did actually submerge himself seven times in Jordan, we suppose it was by way of compromise for not being allowed to use his own country's larger streams. Our translators render "rächats" by "wash," and "täbal" by "dip," in that chapter. But the question comes: Was that prophet who was living under the law, giving directions in accord with it, or, would he vary from God's command for cleansing the leper? We believe as God's law commanded the leper to be sprinkled "seven times," that so would have been Elijah's action had he personally ministered upon that foreigner. As it was he commanded him to "rächats" himself in Jordan seven times. But it is also natural to conclude that, after all, the "seven dippings" which Naaman chose to take were such as were commanded in the law, Leviticus xiv, 6; that is, that they were partial

wettings. The fact noticed is that the *official* word and act for the ceremonial use of water, are expressed with positiveness in "näzä," which, as shown, means "to sprinkle." But no leper or other person was told to sprinkle himself. Therefore, as the prophet sent Naaman to minister on himself, he used the words "rächats," and did not tell him to "(näzä) sprinkle" himself. According to the meaning of "rächats," Naaman must have applied the water to his person; but we do not think that he sprinkled the water upon himself, for that was the mode used by the ministers of God officially. Whatever his act was, it must have been in sufficient conformity to the prophet's command, as the healing ensued.

In Numbers viii, 7, the "water of purification" was sprinkled upon the Levites in the ceremony of setting them apart to God's service. It was God's mark—invisible afterwards to mortal eyes, but seen by Him—upon those whom He claimed as His servants. In Verse 6, the sprinkling was the cleansing. Here is the proof that the use of the water was not for a real washing of the body, and that, *in God's use of the terms*, "wash" and "cleanse" had a *figurative, ceremonial significance only*. This should be remembered as another discovered *fact*. Thus, in Numbers xix, the water of separation was "sprinkled" to "cleanse the unclean." A "clean" person was to sprinkle the "unclean." These are the "baptisms" (washings) mentioned in Hebrews ix, 10. We presume the writer of that epistle understood what he was doing when he wrote "baptismois" as descriptive of the "washings." The several kinds of baptisms (baptismois) were with oil, blood, and water; therefore, he wrote *διαφοροις βαπτισμοις* (diaphorois baptismois)—divers baptisms.

Those ceremonial laws and baptisms were certainly in force until and during our Lord's life on earth. Thus we come with them to the work of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Christ; and we must study his mode of baptizing. He was the greatest baptizer in Israel. We know

that he was sent of God and worked under His laws; therefore, his mode could not have been contrary to that commanded in those laws. It must have been the mode in use from the first and until his day; that is, John undoubtedly baptized by sprinkling. Our study (and we cannot detect error in it) being correct, this is not an assumption but a proved fact. The people were not confronted by a new thing when John came "baptizing." The acceptance given him by a people so exceedingly jealous of any changes in the laws of Moses, proves that they were not called upon to submit to a new rite in either mode or nature. All preceding generations had been accustomed to the "divers baptisms"—the various kinds with oil, blood, and water; but none had known any God-ordained mode except the sprinkling. As it was the office of God's commissioned ministers to baptize, therefore John, a full-blooded Aaronic prophet-priest (Luke i), came lawfully to the work, and he was specially commissioned of God, John i, 33. It is impossible to believe that, under such circumstances, he would have changed the mode commanded of God and which had been used by all his predecessors. No one was surprised at his coming to baptize. They asked: "Why baptizest thou, if thou be not (*ὁ Χριστος*—ho Christos) the Christ? nor Elias? neither that prophet?" John i, 25. The questions were not as to his *work*, but as to *himself*. The people wished to know who the baptizer was. Their inquiries also show that they were expecting the Christ, or His representative, to baptize when He should come. Had John introduced a new mode he would have been called upon for authority and explanations. See how those same people resisted every approach to changes which they considered that Jesus made! And the most fatal charge which they could invent against Stephen, Acts vi, 14, 15, was: "We have heard him say that Jesus shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us." They questioned John very closely, but not one question indicates that they saw any inclination, in what he said or did, to

"change the customs of Moses." So too, the very words of the record prove that John continued the mode of the fathers. We read: "John baptized (en hudati) with water." In some places (especially in Luke's writings), only "hudati," which is the correct form, is used, Luke iii, 16; Acts i, 5. It is the Greek dative, and the translation "with water," is correct. (See prepositions in next chapter.)

A question, the exact wording of which is not given, arose between "the Jews" and the disciples of John about "purifying," John iii, 25. It was, we think, a question bearing upon the authority of the disciples to baptize; for John's disciples brought it as a complaint (no doubt incited by "the Jews"—the Scribes and Pharisees) against Jesus. It looks as if they told John that Jesus was undermining his popularity with the people, Verse 26. The Pharisees (iv, 1) were always wanting to know of Jesus: "By what authority doest thou these things?" Matthew xxi, 23. In keeping with this, they would try to arouse jealousy against Him and His disciples. Here it seems that they tried to make a breach between John and Jesus. If so, John's reply (John iii, 27–36) shows how signally they failed.

As the question was about "purifying" and in connection with baptizing (Verse 26) that indicates that the ceremonial baptizing was still going on. We will confirm this in our Chapter XXXII, where it is shown that John and his work were under the Old Dispensation.

We consider no questions as to John's ability to baptize the thousands who flocked to his ministry, during the time of his service. The holy records say that he baptized them; and that suffices. But we do not think that he baptized all the people of the country; for the disciples of Jesus are shown to have baptized so many as to excite the jealousy of John's own followers. However that may be, if John used the Scriptural mode he did not have impossible work even if called to baptize every one in Palestine. In Hebrews ix, 19, we read that Moses, using "scarlet wool and hyssop," sprinkled "both the book and all the people"

at Mt. Sinai. "All the people were six hundred thousand men, besides children," Exodus xii, 37. It was done within a short time, and in God's way. His way was in the use of "scarlet wool and hyssop." The hyssop was the divinely-chosen plant for use in such baptizings. Why it was selected is not for us to say. No explanations are in the records. God commanded its use; and His ministers obeyed Him! We have heard mockings at the idea of baptizing in that way. It is enough to say that those who so act or speak, are guilty of mocking at a special ordaining of God! And why may not John have used what was so efficient in the hands of Moses? Both ministered under the same laws and Dispensation; and their missions were much the same; for Moses prepared the hosts of Israel for the special manifestation of God, in the Law; and John prepared the hosts of Israel for the special manifestation of God, in the Gospel. To John and all the people, nothing would be more familiar, of things used in God's service, than the "bunch of hyssop"; and they would hold it in reverence too, because of its holy associations with God's service in all the generations of their fathers. It would serve in the hands of John, as in the hands of Moses.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MODE OF BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Jesus succeeds John—Did He change the former mode?—Meaning of "baptizo" illustrated—The mission of Jesus—Law and Prophets—Isaiah lii, 15, and Ezekiel xxxvi, 25—Rule for mode in Christ's example. Δειπνον (deipnon) and βαπτιζω (baptidso)—A modern case of "into the water"—Prepositions—The Eunuch's baptism, in Acts viii—Places of baptism—"In Jordan;" Christ "in the sea"—The only authoritative illustration—"Actions speak louder than words."

THIS chapter is written under the government of one proposition, namely: *Jesus Christ, as only Head of the Church, dictates the faith and manners of the New Dispensation.* After John the Baptist, He is the next great baptizer. We have seen that so the people expected Him to appear. To John they said: "Why baptizest thou if thou be not the Christ?" It has been also shown that He did not baptize with water, but "with the Holy Spirit, and with fire," only. In Isaiah xxxii, 15, Joel ii, 27–32, and in Acts i, is the repeated prophecy of this baptism. It was preached by John the Baptist, and fulfilled and explained in Acts ii. Whether in prophecy or in fulfillment, the mode of this baptism *is always described as a descending upon those receiving it.* Not once are any contradictory terms used. We cannot, therefore, be in doubt as to the mode in which the Head of the Church administered His baptism.

But what about the rite of baptism with water? Without contradiction this rite is regarded by all the "churches" as the symbol of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, so far as we are informed; and that is, assuredly, the Scriptural idea of it. Our next thought is this: It is natural to expect a symbol to correspond in its degree with the thing symbolized by it. That is, if the thing symbolized has a mode in its administration, its symbol should be of corresponding

mode in its administration. By such reasoning the mode of the rite ought to be a descending upon those receiving its application. But we will not "jump at conclusions." Preceding studies say that the Old Dispensation mode of using water ritually was "sprinkling," and that John the Baptist adhered to that mode. The next inquiry is: Did our Lord introduce another mode in closing the Old, and opening the New Dispensation? And at once it may be said: "The Spirit is never spoken of as being sprinkled; but the prophecy said He would be poured out. Therefore, the Old Dispensation mode of using water was different." That cannot be considered as good reasoning, for the question is one of mode, not of possible administrations of the mode. Whether pouring, sprinkling, falling upon, or any other terms are used, the essential idea in all is *a descending upon* as the mode. Keeping this in view, therefore, we return to our question: Did our Lord introduce another mode? We cannot see that He did. The Jews were ever ready to find fault with whatever He did, as every reader of the Bible knows. Now then, had He so much as mentioned a new mode for the ritual use of water, would we not find some—even if remote or shadowy—evidence of it in the captious and ever-ready criticisms of the Scribes and Pharisees? Yet nothing of the kind appears anywhere.

In Acts ii (according to Joel's prophecy, and as Peter declared) the baptism with the Holy Spirit was poured out, or "shed forth"—descended upon the subjects of it. The result was that the disciples were put into a condition of subjection to the Holy Spirit. The record says: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." The controlling influence of the Spirit was upon them. The position of the respective parties is to be noticed thus: Jesus the baptizer, was active in the administration; but the disciples were passive in the reception of the baptism. They simply received what was made to fall upon them. At a later date (Acts x), when the Holy Spirit fell upon

Cornelius and his friends, the mode was so much the same that Peter was reminded of the Pentecostal baptism, and used the words "poured out" as descriptive of what he saw. Look where we will, the evidence is entirely positive that the mode was a descending upon those baptized. Thus it is seen that the two great baptizers, John and Jesus, administered their baptisms in precisely the same mode.

There is also matter for study in our Lord's declared mission. In Matthew v, 17, He said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." The records show that He fulfilled the types in the law-sacrifices by "the sacrifice of himself." How would He fulfill the prophecies but by doing what they had said He would do?

As to the law, He not only fulfilled it in His sacrificial atonement; but He honored it in a life of perfect obedience. What then was His action as to the mode of baptism commanded by the law? Did He honor the law by maintaining it in that also? If He did, then the law-mode must have been confirmed by Him; and that mode was represented in sprinkling. That was the form for the *ritual use* of water under the law which Jesus said He came to fulfill, and not to destroy. Therefore, when He commanded baptism for the New Dispensation—baptism, which is still the *ritual use* of water—must He not have intended that it should continue in the form of sprinkling? The mission of Jesus was, in part, to honor and teach others to honor the law which commanded sprinkling as the ritual use of water in God's service. Would He have fulfilled His mission, in that particular, if He had changed the mode? Are we to think that He honored the law in the mode of His Spirit-baptism, but ignored it in the symbol—the rite of baptism? Or, in commanding the rite did He go contrary to His own example in administering the real baptism? It seems as child-play to shape a criticism upon the difference in the two words "sprinkle" and "pour," when both so evidently mean the same mode; for what is "pour" but a larger form of "sprinkle"?

Our Lord came to fulfill "the prophets" also; that is, to conform to what they said of Him and His work. And what, bearing on our study, did they say? One (Isaiah lii, 15) said of the Christ: "He shall sprinkle many nations." Does not that read as if the prophet had in mind the old covenant-promise to Abraham? "The seed" of Abraham was to bless "many nations"; and (Galatians iii, 16) the Christ was "the seed" of Abraham who was to fulfill that promise. He came for that purpose, Romans xv, 8.

In Isaiah lii, 15, the word which is translated "sprinkle," is the very word (נָזָה näzä) which told us what was the mode for the official use of water under the law. But we have heard that, in this place, it should be translated by "rejoice, astonish," etc. We cannot reconcile that with what is plainly seen in the Bible. And so far as our knowledge goes, this is the only passage in which anyone even pretends to find fault with the translation of "näzä" in all the Bible. Confessedly, everywhere else it is rightly translated by "sprinkle." Then, why not here? Without objection "sprinkle" is accepted in Exodus xxix, 21; Leviticus iv, 16, 17; v, 9; vi, 27 (Hebrew 28); viii, 11, 30; xiv, 7, 16, 27, 51; xvi, 14, 15, 19; Numbers viii, 7; xix, 4, 18, 19, 21; 2 Kings ix, 33. And why not in Isaiah lii, 15, as in Isaiah lxiii, 3? Primarily, the word means "to leap, exult, spring, a sparkling flying out," etc, and so was applied to the bright drops of water "flying out" in sprinkling. Thus it came to be used for the sprinkling of any liquid. We have given twenty-one other passages in which "sprinkle" is acknowledged by all to be the correct rendering. Only in Isaiah lii, 15, and for no good reason that we can see, is any objection made. The matter stands thus: Under the Old Dispensation sprinkling was God's law for official, ritual, use of water. That Isaiah referred to the use of *water* we cannot assert. He may have meant the sprinkling of blood in the applied atonement of Christ, which did and does cause many to rejoice. But neither the result of Christ's work nor the kind of liquid is in question.

We are seeking to know what mode is expressed. The imparting of the blessings of salvation is through the "sprinkling" of the blood, Hebrews xii, 24; 1 Peter i, 2, etc. Isaiah witnesses that God's mode (whether figurative or real) with liquids, was "sprinkling." Another prophet (Ezekiel xxxvi, 25) says for Christ: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." It was a promise for the New Dispensation. The language is that common in the ritual use of water for the baptisms of that time. Even, if it be figurative, it remains true that the mode in the figure is sprinkling; and the reason for the mode in the figure must be in the mode of the reality. If here is a figure of speech, what can it be based upon but the mode of using the water of purification in the time when the prophet wrote? There is contrast in this, that the water of purification had ashes in it, but this water of which Ezekiel speaks is called "clean." Still the mode is one. Probably the word "clean" is used here in the ceremonial significance as when we read in the law, of a "clean person"—that is one who was ceremonially clean. The Hebrew word here is זָרַק (zäraq), meaning "to scatter, to sprinkle," etc. It is found in many passages from Exodus ix, 8, 10 to Hosea vii, 9. Putting all the indications together, we are assured that there was no change in the mode which God first gave to His people. It was ordained and taught in the law. It was represented in the language of the prophets. It was used by John the Baptist, and in the same mode—a falling upon—our Lord sent the baptism "with the Holy Spirit." The word "pour" is used in connection with both the water and the Spirit in Isaiah xliv, 3: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty; * * * I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed." Now those who are thirsty for water to drink, do not have it poured upon them, but it is received within them. They drink it. Who then is the "thirsty" one upon whom God would "pour water?" Jesus says in Matthew v, 6: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." They

will be filled when the Holy Spirit is poured upon them, as were the disciples on the day of Pentecost. But the mode was in the descent—the pouring of the Spirit upon them. So then, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty" is the equivalent of "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed." The poured water is the symbol of the poured Spirit, and in embracing those "who thirst after righteousness" and their "seed" in the same promise, God showed His remembrance of His covenant with His Church. There is no language used by any writer in the Bible which suggests a mode differing from that at first ordained. Whether the word used be "sprinkle" or "pour," the mode is always one; and it is so whether the baptism be real or symbolic. The mode, in the figure and in the thing represented by the figure, is the *application to the person* of that with which he is baptized, or which is represented as cleansing him. We find no teachings of *persons applied to* that with which they are baptized or cleansed, under God's laws. If it be insisted that Naaman "dipped" himself in Jordan, that is not certain as we showed in the preceding chapter, but if that be a fact, it is as truly a fact that in doing so he departed from God's law for cleansing lepers, and did not perfectly conform to the prophet's command, for the prophet said "rächats," not "täbal." (See meanings in preceding chapter.)

It is not the *water* which is to be baptized, nor the *blood of Christ* which is to be cleansed, but, as we understand, the persons of sinners are to receive the symbolic cleansing of the baptism with the water, and the real cleansing through the spiritual application of the blood of Christ. The ritual element, water, is to be applied by the baptizer, and the merits of Christ's atonement, represented in the blood, are to be applied by the Holy Spirit.

The risen Lord was the active agent in the administration of the baptism "with the Holy Spirit," and the disciples were the passive recipients of His administration. So in all the ceremonial and symbolic baptisms with water,

God's ministers were the active administrators, and those baptized by them were the passive receivers. The administrator is to perform the act; the subject of baptism is to submit to that act upon his person. So, to baptize is to do something *with* that used in baptizing, and *to* those who are to be baptized.

Again: Our Lord said, "I came to do the will of him that sent me." Therefore, He must have perpetuated the mode of using water officially and ritually, as ordained in the unrepealed will of God who sent Him. But yet more instructive and convincing is the study of the positive example of Jesus, as given to those whom He sent forth to be the teachers of His Church. At the beginning of the preceding chapter (which see), a question came to us in this form: Whence did we get our mode of administering the Lord's Supper? And, as there illustrated, we saw that the mode of that institution was not in the meaning of the Greek word, and could not be deduced from it. Further, we referred to the fact that this mode could not even be found in the use of the word δειπνον (deipnon) in the New Testament records. What we do, therefore, in administering the Lord's Supper is not according to the meaning of the Greek word, nor to its general New Testament usage. The mode is *wholly derived from what our Lord did*—His example—when He administered the ordinance. But little thought is needed in order that any may see that this is a correct assertion. In all the "churches" we follow His example in administering the Supper. Our law is the law which governed Paul, and to which he demanded that the Corinthians should conform, when he rebuked their violation of the Lord's mode, saying, 1 Corinthians xi, 23–29: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he

had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

Thus he described the Lord's "manner," or mode, as the law for the Church. Therefore, as all have submitted to that guidance, we all have the same "faith and manners" in the administration of the Lord's Supper. Some differences there are in the posture of the recipients; but none, worthy of note, in the mode of administration. The real mode is one with all.

Now the question naturally comes: If, independent of all Greek and New Testament usage and of definitions in lexicons, the Lord's "manner" (or mode) of administering this institution governs the Church, why should not the "manner" (or mode) of the same Lord govern His Church to the same extent as to the mode of administering the other institution—baptism? Let the question of posture of recipients be utterly excluded, for it is not involved. The disciples at the first Supper were reclining, as is supposed. But *what was the Lord's manner of administering the Supper* to them? That is the only inquiry with which we have to do.

The Corinthians had arranged for the Supper according to the meaning of the Greek word "deipnon," and so were having a literally "full meal, a feast." But Paul told them, Verse 20, "This is not to eat the Lord's Supper." They were not having it administered at all as the Lord had ordained by His "manner" that it must be done. The Apostle's rebuke is positive prohibition against going to worldly sources for information as to the way of obeying

the Lord's commands to His Church. Nothing can be plainer. The teaching is this: No human idea or usage is to come between the Church and the will of its Head, whether His will be expressed in words or deeds. As clearly as could be done, Paul taught that the Lord's will for the mode of the Supper had been expressed in His manner of administering it. His warning, Verses 27, 29, was not directed against the spiritual condition of the Corinthians, as is often thought; but it bore upon their wrong manner (or mode) of action. Therefore, he used an adverb, "unworthily," instead of an adjective, "unworthy." He was speaking of the wrong manner of doing, and so showed the right manner according to the Lord's "manner." Our Lord's manner gave "deipnon" a special meaning (in the character of the Supper) for His service, and a meaning different from that even in general New Testament usage. This is seen in such passages as Mark vi, 21; Luke xiv, 12–24; John xii, 2, etc.

Now if we are to stand loyal to Christ as the Supreme Head of the Church and the "one Lord" of its members and ordinances, we must follow His example in administering the institutions which He gives. As if by common consent, the "churches" have refused to follow the lead of Greeks and lexicons in respect to the meaning of "deipnon," for the Lord's Supper. Why? Because the Lord's manner showed how He wished that ordinance to be administered. That is the origin of our conformity. But we cannot see why it is not just as truly our duty to put aside all sources of information, except the Lord's example, in seeking to know and conform to His will in respect to the rite of baptism. But some one may say: Jesus did not administer the baptism with water; therefore, He left us no example of administering it. If any such thought is in the reader's mind, he would better, first of all, review what has been said on these pages. Then one or two things will be understood, namely:

I. Jesus never gave one teaching in which was any criticism of or opposition to the established mode of the baptizings under the Mosaic law.

II. He never uttered one word, nor performed one act which could be even imagined to indicate that He had the remotest idea of changing the God-ordained mode which had prevailed to the time of His coming.

III. He saw John using the old mode, and superintended His own disciples in following up John's work after the latter was imprisoned; yet not by one word or deed did He show disapprobation of the old mode.

IV. When He instituted the rite of Christian baptism, Matthew xxviii, 18–20, He did not, by any word or deed, intimate nor hint that its administration was to be at all different in mode from that which had prevailed as the will of God from the beginning.

V. When He administered His "one baptism," His mode accorded with that always used in baptizing with water; that is, the mode was in the form of an application, to the subjects, of that with which He baptized. His mode is described by various terms (all holding one idea of mode), such as "poured, shed forth, fell upon," etc.

Every consideration leads to the conviction that He left the mode just as He found it; or more correctly, just as He, as God, had ordained it. True, here and there the translation give instances where people seem to have been applied to the water instead of being the passive recipients of the rite. But we are fully prepared to make the following statement: In all the records there is not one case which, if rightly understood, contradicts our Lord's manner in baptizing with the Holy Spirit, or which is contrary in mode to any preceding baptisms.

We have carefully examined every verse in the New Testament and know that the above statement is correct. The main trouble with those who will take exceptions to our assertion, is in the translation of the prepositions. We went through the whole book many times — once for each

preposition—comparing the Greek with the translations. It was very tedious work, but we did it with patience and persistence *because we wanted the truth*, and meant to have it if man could find it through efforts girded with unceasing prayer for the Holy Spirit's enabling and guidance. We were not seeking to find fault with the work of the translators, and do not consider that we have scholarship sufficient to criticise them. It was simply "a question of facts." And this all know, that the translators were but men. Therefore, they were not infallible. Where clash or doubt came we turned to the language of the Holy Spirit, in Hebrew or Greek, and studied that. As the result we say: Even in the common English version, every record can be easily harmonized with our Lord's manner of baptizing and with the mode of God's ordaining under the Old Dispensation. We trust that our beloved brother (Rev. W. C. White) will pardon us for taking another illustration from his diligent ministry. On one occasion there were several "candidates for baptism" before him. Having no water in the church-building, but a small stream being near, he said: "Come, let us go down to the water. Having reached the stream, he stepped into it, caught up some water in his hand and applied it to the persons to be baptized. Then he came "up out of the water" into which he had gone down. He baptized "in" that stream, as we read of John baptizing "in the river Jordan;" yet there was no clash with the Lord's manner. The act of baptizing was not in the going into the water, but in the use of the water by the minister. If we will quietly look at the cases of baptism in the New Testament we will see that each may be regarded as having been performed in about the same manner.

But we will now show how little reason we have to put our trust in the translation of the prepositions of the New Testament, having examined everyone connected in any possible way with our subject, from the first of Matthew to the last of the Revelation. If we err it will be in figures too small, rather than too large. The common idea is that:

(1.) "*Eis*" must mean "into." (2.) That "*en*" must mean "in." (3.) That "*ek*" and "*apo*" must mean "out of." At the least, as our examination reports:

I. "*Eis*" is translated by fourteen different words in Matthew; by ten in Mark; by twelve in Luke; by twelve in John; by seventeen in Acts; by eleven in Romans; by twenty in the epistles to the Corinthians; and so on to the end of the New Testament.

II. "*En*" is translated by thirteen different words in Matthew; by ten in Mark; by eighteen in Luke; by six in John; by ten in Acts; by twenty-one in Romans, etc.

III. "*Ek*" is translated by nine different words in Matthew; by five in Mark; by eight in Luke; by nine in John; by nine in Acts; by six in Romans, etc.

IV. "*Apo*" is translated by nine different words in Matthew; by three in Mark; by six in Luke; by five in John; by ten in Acts, etc.

This suffices for our purpose. Now how are we to know which of those translations ought to be applied to baptisms?

While it is a precious truth that no translation given us, has affected any doctrine which is essential to salvation; and that none which can be made will affect such doctrines hurtfully; still, it is just as true that the variations in the translations of some of the small words forbid our trust in them as safe guides to truth and duty. As illustrative, we present a study of the baptism of the Eunuch in Acts viii.

In that chapter, "eis" is translated by "to, in, unto, into, and at." Which ought we to adopt? And why take one rather than the other? In Verse 38, we read: "They went down both (eis) into the water." In Verse 26, "The way goeth down (eis) unto Gaza." In Verse 3, "Committed (eis) to prison." In Verse 16, "Baptized (eis) in the name of the Lord Jesus." In Verse 23, "Thou art (eis) in the gall of bitterness." In Verse 25, "Returned (eis) to Jerusalem." In Verse 27, "Had come (eis) to Jerusalem." In Verse 40, (twice) "Found (eis) at Azotus," and "came

(eis) to Cesarea." Now why must "eis" be confined to "into," in Verse 38? We could understand if, as in Acts iii, 2, 3, 8; v, 21; ix, 6; x, 24; xi, 12, etc., the preposition (eis) were *doubled* in Verse 38, that is, prefixed to the verb, and used also before the noun, for that would mean positively an actual going within, or into. But it is not double in this verse, nor in any other record of baptism; nor does the verb used indicate actual *entrance into*. What, then? This translation is entirely arbitrary. It has nothing to warrant it. Therefore, we cannot accept it in opposition to the ascertained will of God for the mode of baptizing. It clashes with the "manner" of our Lord also; and that ought to be its final doom! "But," someone may complain, "all readers of the Bible cannot consult the Holy Spirit's mind in the Greek." More is the pity; and yet more if their ministers cannot, or will not, so as to report "the mind of the Spirit."

What are the facts in this record? Facts are law! In Acts viii, 31, the Eunuch "desired Philip that (*αναβαντα*, anabanta) having come up" into the chariot, he would sit with him. Philip complied; and so there they are, "both Philip and the Eunuch," up in the chariot. In Verse 30, Philip had asked him if he understood what he was reading; and the invitation to come up and sit in the chariot was given in order that Philip might explain the Word of God. In Verse 32, (literally) "The passage of the Scripture which he was reading was this, As a sheep to slaughter he was led, and as a lamb before him who shears him (is) dumb, thus he opens not his mouth."

It was a part of the prophecy about Christ, in Isaiah lii and liii; and the Bible was not then cut up into chapters, as now—sometimes, as there, separating the parts of a subject. As the two—"both Philip and the Eunuch"—traveled along, while Philip explained the prophecy, they came to some water by the roadside; and the Eunuch (see Greek) exclaimed, as if surprised, or glad: "(*Ιδου ὕδωρ*—Idou hudōr) Behold, water! What doth hinder me to be

baptized?" Philip consenting, the chariot was halted; "and (κατεβησαν αμφοτεροι — katebêsan amphoteroi) they went down, both." Now question this record.

Where had "both" been?

Sitting together, up in the chariot, Verse 31.

From whence did they "both" go down?

From up in the chariot where they had "both" been sitting. Both were up in the chariot; and both went down to the ground from up in the chariot when they came to the water.

What other going down was there?

None at all, except as the water-level may have been lower than the road-bed. But there is no allusion to that in the records.

What words show that they "entered into" the water?

None! The only verb of going down, describes the descent of "both" from up in the chariot. And as the preposition (eis) is not doubled, it does not indicate an actual entrance into the water.

After they went down to the ground, what did they do?

They went "εις το ὕδωρ (eis to hudōr) to the water;" and there Philip administered the baptism. Then ανεβησαν εκ του ὕδατος (anebêsan ek tou hudatos) they came up "from the water," and back to the chariot where they separated.

Why not translate "anebêsan ek tou hudatos" by "They came up out of the water"?

1. Because the language of the Holy Spirit does not say that they had been into the water.

2. Because the preposition "ek," is not doubled to show an actual coming out. In Revelations xix, 21, we read: "Which sword proceeded out of his mouth." That was an actual coming from within his mouth; therefore, the preposition (ek) is doubled in the Greek, thus: εκ-πορευομενη εκ του στοματος (*ek*-poreuomenê *ek* tou stomatos).

As "anabanta," of Verse 31, got Philip up into the chariot where the Eunuch already was; so "katebêsan," of Verse 38, got them "both down" from up in the

chariot to the ground. Then they went to the water, and returned to the chariot (ek) from the water. These are the simple facts in the case. The verb *καταβαινω* (katabainō), Verse 38, does not mean "to go down into" anything; but only "to descend from a higher to a lower place," etc., as from that chariot to the ground, or to the lower level of the water. And the other verb, "anabainō," of Verse 31, does not mean "to come up out of," but simply "to go up, ascend," etc., from a lower to a higher place. Thus the evidence is all against the common translation. Philip and the Eunuch did not enter the water at all. They went "to" and came "from" it.

It is to be noticed that in the record of Philip's instruction there is no mention of baptism. What, then, suggested it to the Eunuch? As a student of the Old Testament—the only Scriptures then existing—he would know the law for ceremonial baptizings and their mode. In the passage before him were the words about the very Christ whom Philip explained to him: "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Did that suggest baptism? This man was a worshiper of God according to the Jewish faith, and was probably a proselyte; for he was of the Gentiles (of north-eastern Africa), and therefore was to be baptized when accepting Jesus as the Christ. We are not told that Philip "preached *Christ*" unto him; for he already (in common with all of Jewish faith) believed in the Christ to come. But the record is: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him *Jesus*." Many thousands believed in the Christ, but the great theme of the preachers, after the resurrection and ascension, was "*Jesus is the Christ.*"

Places of baptism were various. Philip baptized the Samaritans in their city, and the Eunuch by the roadside; Cornelius and friends were baptized in his residence; the jailer in the outer apartment of the prison; Lydia by the river-side, etc., wherever the converts to the faith were won.

In the common version John the Baptist is said to have baptized "in the river Jordan; in the wilderness; in Bethabara beyond Jordan, and at Aenon."

We cannot follow the translation of the prepositions, as already shown; and in former studies we saw that John must have baptized in the mode of the Dispensation to which he belonged. If the reader will refer to our list of various translations of the prepositions he will find reason for doubt as to the translation of this preposition, "en," in the work of John. Put "in the wilderness" and "in Jordan," together. *Locality*, only, is meant. So of "in Bethabara," and "at Aenon." Turn to Mark iv, 1. There we read that Jesus *sat in the water of the sea*, if we take the face of the record. He "sat (en) in the sea; and (in contrast) the whole multitude was (pros) by the sea (epi) upon the land." But does not everyone's common sense tell him how to understand that record? Let the same common sense be applied to records of John's baptisms; see also John x, 39–42. Did Jesus go and live *in the water?* He did, if "in the place where John at first baptized" was in the water. What are the facts? John baptized in several localities, and the people came to each place to be baptized. "In the river Jordan," as any student of Bible-history ought to know, referred only to locality. Jordan had two sets of banks—was a double-banked stream. Ordinarily, the river-water was confined to the inner set; but in times of freshets the overflow filled the outer set of banks. See Joshua iii, 15; iv, 18; also, 1 Chronicles xii, 15. ("For Jordan overfloweth all his banks, all the time of harvest.") The space between the two sets of banks is one-eighth of a mile, or about that. On that space, between the outer and inner banks, was the place where John worked; and all between those banks, even when there was no overflow, was regarded (and called so) as "in the river Jordan." But what of "much water" at Aenon? The Greek is "hudata polla," meaning (not much water, but) "many waters," or springs. Certainly John did not leave Jordan to find *quantity* of

water; for the river furnished far more than the "many springs" of Aenon. The probability is that a freshet in Jordan made the water muddy and "unclean" so that it could not be used any longer for the rite which, by law, must be administered with "clean" water. John had to obey that law, for he was working under the Old Dispensation. (See our Chapter XXXII.) And so, too, he must have baptized in the mode of sprinkling; for that was the mode in force at the time.

The record in Acts ii is the authoritative illustration of the Lord's will for mode in baptizing. He spoke no law for sprinkling, under the New Dispensation, *because the law was already given and in force:* and He had no intention of repealing it. Neither by any word or act did He unsettle or repeal that law, Therefore, it stood, and still stands as God's idea for His Church!

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Origin of the title—"Easter"—Supper and Passover—"New" in the Father's kingdom—The Mediator, Galatians iii, 20—The "cup." Observance—"One body"—Corinthian errors—Iscariot—The Supper is for all—Personal responsibility—Church power—The Supper; for whom?—Language used—Qualifications—Guiding passages—Connection with the Christian Sabbath. (See Chapter XXXIX.)

WE have this ordinance immediately from the hands of our Lord; therefore its title. It refers to and preaches of Him as nothing else does. It is all his own! This is the only "feast" that comes to us from Him, or from any part of God's Word. In Acts xii, 4, the translation speaks of "Easter," and for that, at least, the translators are to be censured. No argument is needed to prove the translation inexcusable, for the word rendered "Easter," is *πασχα* (pascha), meaning "passover," and it is so translated in every other place. (But see our Chapter XXXVIII, where the matter is treated.)

Besides baptism and the Supper, our Lord gave no other "sacraments" (as they are sometimes called,) to His Church; and the "Apostle to the Gentiles" was very earnest in his warnings against multiplying ordinances which were not of Divine origin and authority. As an example of his teachings on that point, we call attention to Colossians ii, 6–10; 20–23: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the

Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. * * * Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." That Paul had the mind of the Lord, is seen in the condemnations which the Lord, himself, uttered in Matthew xv, 9, against those who taught the "commandments of men" as the "doctrines" of God; see also Mark vii, 7. But we are to give this subject a study in a future chapter.

The Supper was instituted before our Lord's death and in anticipation of it, at His last (*πασχα*—pascha) Passover. It was given to be the memorial of His death, and a prophecy of His return, or "second coming," when He is to "appear without sin unto salvation." For the New Dispensation, the Supper takes the place of the Passover of Israel under the Old Dispensation. There is, however, a great difference between the two institutions in some respects, chiefly in this: The Passover memorialized a deliverance from physical death, but the Lord's Supper celebrates a salvation from spiritual death. The former is sometimes regarded as a spiritual institution, but we do not find it to be so in studying its history. It was given to be observed in commemoration of God's great mercy to Israel, but that mercy was shown in a carnal deliverance, when the first-born of Egypt was slain under God's judgments upon Pharoah for his obduracy. Another difference is in the appointment of stated times for observing the Passover; but no such law accompanied or followed the institution of the Supper. It is to be observed until the coming of the Lord, 1 Corinthians xi, 26. Doubtless it is proper to use the Passover as illustrative, but it did not signalize a deliverance from the

bondage under sin, as does the Supper. In Matthew xxvi, 29, etc., our Lord's words mark the substitution of the Supper for the Passover, as the memorial rite for the "many nations" of the Abrahamic covenant; for the Church was not to be longer confined within the bounds of Israel. When the Church received the Gentiles the Passover could have no significance to them; for they were never in the bondage to Egypt, and therefore could have little interest in a feast given to celebrate a deliverance from it. Yet our Lord's idea seems to have been the existence of an ordinance, in the enlarged Church, which would bind His people together in one body of fellowship, as all Israel were bound by a common interest in that which the Passover kept ever fresh in their memory. In the act of institution—changing from the Passover to the Supper—Jesus said: "I will not drink henceforth, of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Compare Acts x, 41.) By these words we understand that He meant: I will not again partake of this Passover until after the opening of the New Dispensation. The Supper was to be a new Passover having entire spiritual meaning; and the old significance of eating and drinking, at the Passover, would be substituted by the new. Hence the Greek word *καινος* (kainos), meaning "renovated," was used. The Supper is the renovated Passover. This change was a part of the Reformer's work. See also Mark xiv, 25; Luke xxii, 16. In the latter passage the explanation is more definite: "I will not any more eat thereof (that is, of the Passover in its old form and meaning), until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then, in Verse 18, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." In Verse 15, He said: "With desire I have desired to eat (*τουτο*—touto) this (not "the") passover with you before I suffer." That was to be the (kainos) "renovated," or new Passover which was to witness to the fact that He did "suffer"; therefore, He said He would not again eat of it (that, then, Lord's Supper) until "it (that

which it was to memorialize), be fulfilled in the kingdom of God," or the New Dispensation.

Thus the word "new" embraced both the bread and the "fruit of the vine"; and the entire ordinance was to be "new" in the "kingdom of God." This phrase, "kingdom of God," evidently meant the Church after it was opened in the gospel of the New Dispensation. No such ordinance had ever before been instituted in the Church, therefore, in that sense also, it was "new."

This then is what we understand the teaching to be: That institution—as thus transformed—stood at that hour as prophecy of the Lord's atonement, but after its prophecy had been fulfilled, it was to stand in the Church to the end of time as the memorial of His atonement. Yet it was to retain a prophetic character too, in preaching that He would return at the last day.

As Head of the Church, our Lord was not publicly declared until after His resurrection. He waited until His triumph was complete, in fact; and until then He deferred giving the commission which was to open the Church to all the world. His right so to open it, and to dictate its future was declared in His words: "All power is given unto me (en) in heaven and (epi) upon earth." Then He took His place, publicly, as the spiritual king of the "many nations" for whose blessing He stood as the "seed of Abraham" in the birth-covenant of His Church. In 1 Corinthians xv, 24–28, we read: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

The Christ holds and will hold office as Mediator between God and man until "the end" which is prophesied in the Supper. Then that office will cease to be, "that God may be all in all"; for (Galatians iii, 20) "God is one." The Mediator is between two separated parties—God and man. Therefore, the two separate and distinct natures were in the person of the Mediator—the God-man, Christ Jesus. He is what never before existed, a double-natured Mediator. In one nature He could not be Mediator between two other natures—the Divine and the human; and the law could not have been put into His "hand" (Galatians iii, 19). He had to be so constituted that both natures should be truly and impartially represented in Him; and only in being thus constituted could He have lived His perfect life and "endured the cross." The requirements of duty were such that human nature, unsupported by the Divine, could never have fulfilled them. But the Supper was to tell all generations that those duties had been successfully performed, and that the Mediator had really opened the way to God's acceptance, in His atonement. As "God is one," he could not, in God-nature alone have represented man's interests, therefore, he added the oneness of man, and became the God-man for the atonement. During His time of office, the gospel and the Supper are to be His witnesses that He successfully represented the interests of both parties between whom He took the office of Mediator; the gospel proclaiming the reconciliation perfected, and the Supper illustrating the manner in which it was done. These witnesses are to testify unto the end of the world; not that the whole world will be actually turned unto God—we do not understand that such a result is to be literally universal—but that all shall have opportunity to be reconciled to God wherever the witnesses shall proclaim and explain "the reconciliation." At "the end," these witnesses will cease to testify, and the God of one nature will resume His sway. Therefore, Jesus taught the prayer: (Not "my kingdom," but), "Thy kingdom come;

thy will be done (epi) on earth as in heaven." In instituting the Supper He looked forward to that great consummation of His redeeming work—the one God's will, which He came to do and teach, all fulfilled, John vi, 38, etc.

The "cup," as all will understand, represents its contents—"the fruit of the vine"—undoubtedly the wine from grapes. There is no indication that the materials—bread and wine—may be changed for substitutes of any kind. If it be impossible to obtain the "elements" of the original kind, we have no liberty to dictate to the Church, and God has given no revelation on the subject. Two thoughts may, however, be expressed:

1. We do not understand, and we find no record intimating that the partaking of the Supper is essential to salvation; therefore, we conclude that in impossible cases it may be omitted without incurring guilt or harm.

2. Undoubtedly the Lord's command for the Supper should be binding where and when obedience is possible, and no light thing should be allowed to interfere. But we cannot think that obedience, *in the act*, is essential if it be truly impossible. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart," 1 Samuel xvi, 7.

As we find no commands nor other teachings of positive character as to the frequency of observing the Supper, we can only infer that the matter is left to circumstances, judged by the wisdom and discretion of God's people. But the words of our special teacher: "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup (*καταγγελλετε*—kataggellete) ye publish the Lord's death till he come," indicate that the observance must not cease. It is the ever-renewed "oath of allegiance" to the Lord, and the continual prophecy of His second coming; and so it is warning, also, to all, that they may be in readiness for His "glorious appearing."

The Greek word used in speaking of this institution (deipnon) we have before noticed. It occurs often in the New Testament; but only once (1 Corinthians xi, 20) do we find it in combination (*κυριακον δειπνον*—kuriakon deipnon)

as "Lord's Supper." It was left for the "Apostle to the Gentiles," among whom the Church was to live, to give a title to the ordinance for holding the Church together as one body, in one fellowship under the New Dispensation. In 1 Corinthians x, 21, we find "Lord's table," but we are not sure that the reference is really to the Supper. The doctrine of communion and fellowship of all the people of the "one Lord," the recognition, by all, of the one Head, and of each other as members of the one body of that Head—this is, also, the witnessing of the Supper. The "bread" and "the cup" are for all alike among those who profess the name and faith of the "one Lord," and who are striving in the duties of His service. It is an ordinance for all who live by His one atonement, and "who love His appearing." Here the "one faith" looks to the "one Lord" who has been savingly interpreted by the Spirit who was the gift in the "one baptism"; for "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." The Supper is thus the memorial of "the common salvation" (Jude 3) wrought out for all. As we have shown, in the preceding chapter, Paul rebuked the Corinthians for non-conformity to the Lord's "manner" in this ordinance. They had the proper elements (for his rebuke did not include them) but they used the bread and wine to excess. The record says that some were (μεθυει—methuei) "drunken"; that is, "intoxicated," as the Greek word plainly means. And so we discover what is meant by "the fruit of the vine." It was wine which would intoxicate if used to excess, such as is forbidden in Ephesians v, 18; and, by implication, in 1 Peter iv, 3. Had such wine been improper for the Lord's Supper, we may believe that the Apostle would surely have included its use in his rebuke. His rebuke was also against the non-fellowship character of the feast held by the Corinthians, and the absence of spiritual discernment in them, see 1 Corinthians xi, 21, 22. In all that was the eating and drinking "unworthily" as

in the wrong form of their feast. Personal responsibility is taught in Verse 28: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." A like teaching is found in 2 Corinthians xiii, 5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Evidently the Supper was for those only who were capable of such examination, and who made a creditable profession of "the faith." In this it differs from the ordinance of baptism which, as the new seal of the covenant of the Church, is to be received by believers when first coming into covenant with God, then by their infants as (hagios) separated unto God, 1 Corinthians vii, 14. The Supper is for professed believers only—those who can "discern the Lord's body." Those partaking without this prerequisite were said, Verse 29 (1 Corinthians xi), to "eat and drink (*χριμα*—krima) judgment to themselves." The communicant must be able to give his spiritual condition serious, intelligent, scrutiny. In baptism, the *constitutional subject* is to have the rite administered to him, but in the Supper, the only proper participant is the professed, consistent believer. The teachings in 1 Corinthians x, 16–21, may have been given as a basis for the self-examination enjoined. We give the whole passage:

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I *say*, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

The Greek word translated "communion" (twice in Verse 16) is κοινωνια (koinōnia), and means "fellowship," "partnership," etc., and expresses the oneness of interest which all of Christ's people have in His atonement, and in each as one body in Him. We read, Verse 17, thus: "For we being many are one (αρτος—artos) loaf"; and so, again, we are taught the oneness of the Church. There may be many parts, or members, but all are as "one loaf."

In Acts xx, 7 we read that the disciples "came together the first day of the week to eat bread"; and at that time, Paul preached to them. Was that a custom, or was it according to opportunity and circumstances? We cannot tell. But the word "(κλασια—klasia) break," is the word used at the institution of the Supper, Matthew xxvi, 26; Mark xiv, 22; Luke xxii, 19. Still we do not understand that any command limits the ordinance to special times and places. All we can learn is, that if judged best it may form a part of any religious service led by one of Christ's ministers, as He himself, led the service at its institution. That "the first day of the week" was a regular time for religious services and offerings to God, may be concluded from Paul's words in 1 Corinthians xvi, 2; (see Greek) "each first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store," etc. The disciples came together on that day, for religious services, as we have just seen. It was the one memorial of the Lord's resurrection; Matthew xxviii, 1–6; Mark xvi, 1–6, etc. (Our Chapter XXXIX.) It is, therefore, the most natural time for the services of the Supper; but we have no command, nor positive indication that the observance should be on every Lord's day. We have no satisfactory information, on this point, in the fact that (we do not know how often) the disciples came together to break bread on that day; for it is also said that they continued daily in the breaking of bread, from house to house, Acts ii, 46. The last words may indicate social gatherings of semi-religious kind at family meals. Certain terms used by our Lord are to be taken as figurative, or illustrative; as when He said of

the bread: "This is my body"; and of the cup: "This cup is the new (διαθηκη—diathêkê) covenant in my blood," thus distinguishing the gospel from the law-covenant; see Hebrews viii. We are not to think that the bread and the cup (its contents) are literally the body and blood of Christ; but we get the right idea in the words This bread and cup *represent* the body and blood. Other teachings, as understood and accepted by all, easily sustain this interpretation. When we read: "I am the door; I am the true vine; ye are the branches," all understand such illustrations. And so we are to understand the terms used in connection with the Supper. When Jesus said "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood ye have no life in you," He explained: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit," etc., John vi. See also iv, 14; vii, 38, 39.

There are parallels between the Passover and the Supper. All Israel recognized the oneness of the nation at the Passover. All Christians (are to) recognize the oneness of the Church at the Supper. All Israel could not assemble at one Passover-table. Neither can all Christians assemble at one Lord's table. But as all Passover feasts were as one; so are all the local Lord's Suppers. The Passover told one common story to all Israel; the Lord's Supper tells one common story to all Christians. When our Lord broke the bread, He gave a piece of it to each communicant who was present. When He gave "the cup," He said: "Drink ye all of it;" see Matthew xxvi, 27; Mark xiv, 23. In all direct records of the institution of the Supper (John xiii speaks of the Passover only), the evidence seems to be that Judas Iscariot partook of it. That our Lord did not hinder him though knowing his perfidy, is a strong illustration of the doctrine of personal responsibility; 1 Corinthians xi, 28. As participation does not positively declare nor confer salvation, why may not a hypocrite sit at the Lord's Table? We do not learn that the Church has power to read the hearts of communicants; but we understand that it has

declarative power to teach and warn in the name of Christ. Judas was sharply and solemnly warned. If he did partake of the Supper after that, the responsibility was upon him alone. He who could act the hypocrite so far in the Lord's presence in Gethsemane, when he (κατεφιλησεν—katephilêsen) "ardently kissed" Jesus, was fully equal to "brave it out" in the quiet company at the Supper.

The words in Matthew xxvi, 27, "Drink ye all of it," are shown to have been obeyed, by the words of Mark (xiv, 23), And they all drank of it." The doctrine is, not only in the command, but in the example of obedience, that every disciple of Christ is to partake of the Supper in both the bread and the wine. That no special form of covenant-token gives a right to the Supper is seen in the fact that the first participants did not receive Christian baptism; nor is there any record to show that all had even been baptized by John. But they were all of "the circumcision," we know. *Circumcised* members of the Church of Christ, brought the Supper to *baptized* members. So, again, comes the teaching that the Church is one in all ages. That all of Christ's people should now be baptized members of His Church, is not to be doubted. But we have no record to show that baptism is actually essential for coming to the Supper. The one prerequisite is faith; or, at least its credible profession.

Many questions arise as to the laws of communing. Possibly, three passages furnish answers:

I. In 1 Corinthians iii, 10–15, the teaching is that one must build upon the right foundation—Jesus Christ.

II. In 1 Corinthians xi, 28, is taught the duty and responsibility of self-examination.

III. Romans xiv. A chapter for settling "vexed questions." The first verse, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye; but not to doubtful disputations," is worthy of special thought. And Verses 17–19 might, with much profit, be committed to memory.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." See also 1 Corinthians x, 14–21, where we are taught that a choice between "the Lord's table" and the "table of devils" must be made.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Government necessary—God must govern His Church—First officers—"The fathers"—Elders—Duration of Israel's bondage—Sojourning of Israel; Exodus xii and Galatians iii; Genesis xv and Acts vii—Elders not civil rulers.

NO organized society can exist for any length of time without a system of government. This is just as true of the Church as of any other body. And in order to government, there must be officers. In the New Testament this is set forth practically; Acts xiii; xv; 1 Timothy iv, 14, etc.

It is also true and evident that the officers of God's Church must exist and act according to His will. Man is not to choose how God's Church is to be governed. In the organization of the Church, Genesis xvii, God made Abraham the head, and no one else was appointed to rule with him, xviii, 19. Under the will of God, Isaac was next in the succession, Genesis xxvi, 1–5. After Isaac, came Jacob, Genesis xxviii, 13–15. These three received the heirship promises for the world, Romans iv, 13; Hebrews xi, 9. With these three there were others who received the heirship promises for Canaan; but the three were at the head of the Visible Church in its infancy, each in his time; and they were "the fathers" so often mentioned. When their seed became a multitude in Egypt, זְקֵנִים (zeqenim) appear in their history. Primarily, the word means "old men;" but it finally came into use to denote ecclesiastical rulers and representatives. In this sense they are first mentioned (Exodus iii, 16) after the death of Joseph, Genesis l.

When they came into existence no record tells us; but it is probable that they succeeded Jacob, immediately. At

his burial, Genesis l, 7, "elders" of Egypt were present; but they were the chief men of that heathen nation, and, for aught we know, may have been representatives of its false religion. God recognized the "elders" of Israel in His first steps towards the freeing of His people that they might serve Him. They were then an established order in Israel. In seeking their origin, we became interested in the duration of Israel's bondage. We think that the rule of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was during the most of the time of the four hundred and thirty years, from the covenant to the law. In Exodus xii, 40, we read: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years." The word "sojourning" does not mean their time in Egypt, but covers all their history as they were represented in the covenant with their great ancestor, "Abram." They "dwelt in Egypt" a much shorter time than a careless reader of the verse would suppose. The "key" to the passage is Galatians iii, 17. The covenant representation must, necessarily, date from the call of "Abram"; or from the covenant for the nation, in Genesis xv. The reckoning of four hundred and thirty years (Exodus xii; Galatians iii) dates from that call, before it was developed in the covenant of Genesis xvii, about fourteen years later; and the reckoning of four hundred years (Genesis xv; Acts vii) dates from the ratification of the covenant of Genesis xvii. The word "generation" (average of life) meant, in those days, about one hundred years; see Genesis xv. Thus, "the fourth generation" would be about four hundred years. During that time the "seed" would be (*δουλοω*, douloō) put under restraint—would not be a free, unmolested people. Part of the time of the oppressed condition was to be spent among the Canaanites; for two conditions of bondage are indicated in the records. In Genesis xv, 13 and Acts vii, 6, the oppressors are put in the *plural* number: "They shall afflict them." But in Genesis xv, 14 and Acts vii, 7, the *singular* number is used, and only one

nation ("that nation") is mentioned as the enslaver which God would "judge." Beyond doubt this refers to Egypt; for Israel was in actual bondage to no other one nation.

In Acts vii, 6, the word κακαοω (kakaoō) denotes the maltreating during sojourn among Canaanites, before the Egyptian bondage referred to in Verse 7. At two points we lack figures in the records; but the time which had to be estimated, in consequence, is so little that no material difference is made in the calculation.

Ur of the Chaldees was the capital of ancient Chaldea, and was Abram's home at the time of his call. (Some maps give two cities, far apart; but indicating uncertainty, by the point of interrogation, "?". After due consideration we adopt the lower city, as correct).

Our reckoning is as follows:

I. In Genesis xii, 4, Abram leaves Haran at the age of seventy-five years. But he had left Ur sometime before because of his call; compare Genesis xi, 31, and xii, 1–4. His father and others of the family journeyed with him as far as Haran, in upper Mesopotamia, and they "dwelt there." There, Terah, Abram's father, died, aged two hundred and five years. Abram was seventy-five years old when he finally left Haran, after Terah's death. Then Terah must have been less than one hundred and thirty years old at Abram's birth. Probably Abram was the youngest son, but was mentioned first because of his prominence in the history. But how old was he when God called him? The journey to Haran was long and slow, as compared with modern travel. Then there was the delay at Haran, until after Terah's death. The words "dwelt there" indicate a stay of some length. Five years is a small estimate for the journey, and the delay at Haran. So we reach a starting-point for our calculation. We reckon the age of Abram, when his call came, at seventy years; and he was five years older when he left Haran.

II. At Isaac's birth, Abram was aged one hundred years, Genesis xxi, 5.

(1.)	From his call, at seventy years, to Isaac's birth	30 years
	From Isaac's birth to Jacob's birth, Genesis xxv, 26 . .	60
	From Jacob's birth to death, Genesis xlvii, 28	147
		237 years
	During all that time there was no bondage to Egypt.	
(2.)	From covenant to law, Exodus xx, etc.	430 years
	Subtract above time of freedom from Egypt's bondage . .	237
	Time left to be explained after death of Jacob	193 years
(3.)	Joseph's whole age was 110 years.	
	When exalted by Pharaoh, Genesis xli, 46, his age was. .	30 years
	Seven years of plenty, and two of famine before his father, Jacob, came to Egypt, Genesis xlv, 6	9
	As Jacob was aged 130, when he came to Egypt, Genesis xlvii, 9; and he died aged 147, he and Joseph were together in Egypt	17
		56 years
	Subtract these fifty-six years from Joseph's whole age, and we have fifty-four years more in which there was no Egyptian bondage.	
	As above, time to be explained, after Jacob's death . . .	193 years
	Subtract remainder of Jacob's life	54
	Time, after Joseph's death to be accounted for . . .	139 years

But only a part of this time was spent in the bondage. The Egyptians owed their very lives to Joseph. How soon would they forget him and his honored brethren? In thirty years? Fifty years? In Exodus i, 6, we read: "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation." Still there was no bondage. How long after Joseph's death before it began? Surely the Egyptians would not soon bury his memory under the fetters of his people! As an almost ridiculously small estimate, we put the time at thirty years. These, subtracted from the one hundred and thirty-nine, leave one hundred and nine years as the actual time of the bondage. Or, if we reckon, not from the call of Abram, but from the ratification of the covenant in Genesis xvii, thirty years are added making the time of bondage one hundred and thirty-nine years. We are sure it did not exceed that time. The new king, "which knew not Joseph," could not have come to power as soon as Joseph

died. Time was needed for the incoming of another generation, before the great benefactor could be forgotten. Therefore, we think that one hundred years would really cover the time of bondage.

The life of Moses was in eighty years of the time after Joseph's death; indeed it was within the one hundred years; for at his birth he was under the law of the new king who commanded all males to be killed at birth; and that law was the second measure taken to limit the increase of the people. But was not the increase too great for only a century of bondage? About seventy souls came into Egypt with Jacob. He was there seventeen years; and Joseph lived fifty-four years longer. That makes seventy-one years free of bondage. Add the, too few, thirty years for Joseph to be forgotten before bondage would begin, and we have a whole century for the increase. It was much time in those days of long-lived parents and large families. But in Genesis xlvii, 27, we read: "And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt * * * and grew and multiplied exceedingly." That was long before bondage began. They were also under God's special blessing for increase, Genesis xlvi, 3; Psalms cv, 24. So it was not only during bondage that they grew great. They were a great multitude before it began. Let it be noticed that it was because they had so largely increased that they were put in bondage. Before it was imposed we read: "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them," Exodus i, 7. Note the emphasis on the increase.

But there is an apparent contradiction in the records, as to time. We think it is explained thus: The four hundred and thirty years of Exodus xii and Galatians iii, embrace the time from the *covenant-call* to the giving of the law, Exodus xx, etc. But the four hundred years of Genesis xv and Acts vii embrace the time from the *confirming*, or ratification of the covenant in Genesis xvii to the law. The difference is thirty years. It is the time elapsing

between the covenant-call Genesis xi; xii, and the ratification in Genesis xvii, when, so to speak, Israel was born as a covenanted people in "Abram."

From the time of the ratification to the death of Jacob, the covenanted Church had been under the rule of the three Patriarchs—"the fathers." No other officers are mentioned until the year of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Then the "elders" appear. That they were not civil, but religious representatives of the people, is seen:

I. Because Israel was in abject bondage — slavery, ruled by Egyptian "taskmasters" who sorely oppressed them, Exodus i, 11–14. No self-government would have been allowed to such slaves.

II. God's appearance to Moses was a call to religious service; and He recognized the elders as the representatives of the people in a distinct message from that sent to the people. Only to the elders did He send explanations of His plans, Exodus iii, 16, 17; and them, only, did He send to the Pharaoh with Moses to demand freedom for religious service, Verse 18. The people were not organized as a nation, with their own rulers, until after deliverance, Exodus xix.

III. Those elders could not have been merely the "old men" of Israel. The men were about "six hundred thousand." If every thousand furnished only one old man, the delegation to the Pharaoh would have been six hundred. The pitiless taskmasters would not have allowed so many slaves to leave work, and crowd into the royal presence.

IV. After the Pharaoh refused God's demands that the people be allowed freedom for religious service the elders were, seemingly withdrawn from association with Moses and Aaron in missions to him. Until the Passover, Exodus v to xii, nothing more is said of the elders. During the interval God assumed a new attitude towards the resisting government in demanding the absolute and unconditional release of His people, Exodus vi, 1–8; vii, 1–5; xi, 1.

He thus put His people in the position of revolution. Is not that precedent from God, that revolution is right when religious freedom is finally and absolutely denied?

In Exodus xii the elders were directed to act for and with the people, by families, in preparations for the Passover, Verses 21, 23. Here for the first time, "êdah" (congregation), and "qähäl" (assembly) are used. See our Chapter VI. The elders are again associated with Moses, Exodus xvii, 5, in working a miracle during the wilderness-journey. They were not in the civil conflict with the king of Egypt.

In Exodus xviii, preceding conclusions are confirmed. There, Jethro suggested that Moses should appoint "שָׂרִים (särim) rulers" to assist him in judging the people. Here is a different word from that designating the "זְקֵנִים (zeqenim) elders." The elders came with Aaron "to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law, before God." This was a purely religious feast, in which "burnt-offerings and sacrifices" were offered unto God. The next day Moses sat "שָׁפַט (shäpat) to judge" the people. Then Jethro advised him to appoint helpers, Verses 13–26. So Moses chose "able men," and made them "רָאשִׁים (räshim) heads" over the people. They were rulers to assist in civil government, as the records show; and were entirely distinct from "elders" both in title and office. Before their appointment Moses had "sat alone" as judge over Israel. That shows that the "elders" could not have been civil rulers; for had they been, Moses would not have "sat alone" as judge. The word "elder" appears very often in the after-history of Israel; and sometimes the translation does not distinguish between the Hebrew words, but renders several different ones as "elder." Therefore, the connections must be studied.

In those "elders" the Church had its officers throughout all the time after Egyptian bondage. In Exodus xix, when God proposed the "Theocracy" to the people, the "elders" were consulted, for both Church and State were

concerned. In the religious services of Exodus xxiv, 1, 2; Leviticus iv, 15, etc., "elders" were prominent. They are often mentioned as distinct from civil officers, as in Joshua xxiii, 2; xxiv, 1; 1 Kings viii, 1–3; 2 Chronicles v, 2–4, etc. In Joel i, 14; ii, 15, 16, they appear in national religious services. (Compare Numbers x, 7.) And incidentally, we have in Joel's record a recognition of the constitution of the Church as found in other studies. Parents and their babes were called to appear before God for religious services. And all that has come to us in our searchings of the Scriptures impresses one thought, namely: God's idea about His Church is, that the covenanted babes cannot be brought into His service too soon. When we read, as in Joel ii, 16, "Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts,"—and this for religious services,—dare we think that the babes are not recognized as the covenanted members of His Visible Church?

CHAPTER XXXII.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Old Testament study confirmed—When the New Testament began—"Christ being come"—Gospel spread by Christians—Barnabas and Saul—A church court at Antioch—"Prophets"—Saul's waiting for ordination—Difference between "Apostle" and "Preacher"—History of Saul's waiting—Ordination of Barnabas and Saul—Their mission-work. Elders ordained—The ordination word—Authority to ordain, and to organize churches—Timothy and the Presbytery: 1 Timothy i, 4; 2 Timothy i, 6—Timothy's "gift"—Titus in Crete—Power to ordain is limited—Plurality of elders—No superior in the Church—Purposes of "the laying on of hands."

THE "elders" appear in the records of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Those four records of the one gospel are designated, in our Bibles, as of the New Testament; but, in fact, they are the closing up of the Old Testament. The elders there seen were the successors of those we were looking upon in our preceding chapter. Though often opposed to "Jesus of Nazareth,"—not seeing the Christ in Him,—they were elders in the Church which had not then been reformed. Our Lord recognized their authority (and that of the priests who still officered the Church in conjunction with elders). This is put beyond doubt, as to the priests, by such records as Matthew viii, 4, and Mark i, 44. And that the elders were actively associated with those priests, in the management of ecclesiastical affairs, none can doubt in reading the inspired history. The Church had become very corrupt, and they were its corrupt officers. But early in the history of the "time of the reformation" (Hebrews ix, 10,) we find trustworthy elders in Judea, Acts xi, 29, 30. To their care the local church at Antioch sent its contributions for the needy Christians in Judea. Their presence, without a word of introduction or explanation,

not only proves that they belonged to the existence of the Church, but sustains our Old Testament study.

At this point, an interesting question comes: When did the New Testament begin? Doubtless many can answer; but the people, generally, believe it begins with Matthew's record. The Old Dispensation was far from being closed when Jesus came; and to the last moment of His crucifixion it was being fulfilled by Him. Again and again He recognized Mosaic laws as being still in force all during His ministry. Therefore, He sent the healed lepers to the priests, that they might conform to the laws of Moses, Matthew viii, 4; Mark i, 44; Luke v, 14; xvii, 14, etc. And many other records show that the Old Dispensation was not closed until our Lord's last hour on the cross. The blank pages between Malachi and Matthew do not mean a separation of Dispensations. Matthew, Mark, and Luke only carried to its end the history which had engaged preceding writers whose prophecies were being fulfilled by the Christ. The priests and elders who greet us in their records, were the brethren of those from whom we parted in Malachi. The coming of Jesus, and His work until the time of Calvary, did not overthrow one altar, nor stop one priest in his ministry for the people in the sacrificial services. He was closing up the Old Testament, writing its last pages which were to be signed with His blood! Only when He said on the cross: "It is finished," was the veil of the temple "rent in twain from top to bottom" as the sign that the Old Dispensation was closed and the New was to be opened. See Matthew xxvii, 51, Mark xv, 38; compare Hebrews viii, and ix. The words, "Christ being come," refer to His fulfilled mission when He had, by completed atonement, made "an end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and had taken His place as the one Priest, forever, in whom all other priesthood ceased. But the "elders" remained; and their more worthy successors are found all through the subsequent history. Our Lord's reforming work turned some *men* out

of the Church in the "baptism with fire," but the *office* was left; and better men were raised up by the "baptism with the Holy Spirit." For about thirty-three years the elders of the Old Dispensation walked with Jesus on His way from the manger to the cross; and during the about three years of His public ministry were much in conflict with Him. There they were and there they remained. When we examine the history of the Church in the Book of Acts, and in the Epistles, not one record indicates the introduction of the office of elder anywhere within the bounds of the covenanted Church. Only where the gospel was newly introduced among the Gentiles do we find that elders were elected and ordained in every local church which was organized. So was it in the missionary tour of Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiv, 23. But no such record is found in the history of the regions where the Church was already established, as in Israel. There the elders simply came out of the past into the present as natural officers of the Church. When the Church crossed the silent centuries between Malachi and Matthew, it brought its elders with it.

In Acts xi, 27-30, is an interesting mention of them. The gospel had gained a foothold at Antioch, in Syria, where the disciples were first called "Christians." (We regard the title as of human, not divine origin. The record only states a fact. But the title is appropriate for the followers of "Christ." It is used in but two other places in the Bible, Acts xxvi, 28, and 1 Peter iv, 16.)

Because of a great dearth, the disciples at Antioch determined to send aid to their Christian brethren in Judea. This they did by the hands of "Saul and Barnabas," who had been their religious teachers until the Church was fully established. The contributions were sent to the care of the "(presbuteroi) elders," or presbyters; and this proves that the Church existed in Judea, and that its elders were regarded by the local church at Antioch as trustworthy representatives. That those officers were regularly set apart to office is seen in the history of the new planting of

the Church among the Gentiles, Acts xiv, 23. Their qualifications will be considered elsewhere. In Acts xi, 19, 20, we read: "Now they which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch (μηδενι λαλουντες—mêdeni lalountes) to none speaking the word (ei-me) except to Jews only. But some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, having come to Antioch, spake to the Hellenists (Grecians), (ευαγγελιζομενοι—euaggelizomenoi) announcing the glad tidings—the Lord Jesus" (Greek). Guided by these words we see that this was not *official* preaching. It was such conversation as people would engage in when meeting those to whom they wished to tell news, or give information of any kind. It was work done by private members of the Church, not by public preachers; and great success attended those Christian conversations. Beyond doubt there were some public meetings, in which those who brought the "glad tidings" made addresses to the people. God blessed their efforts, for we read: "And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number, (see Greek) having believed, turned to the Lord." News of this work soon reached Jerusalem; and Barnabas, "a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith," was sent to look into it. We cannot find that he was, at that time, an ordained minister of the gospel; but only a man of note and worth in the Church. He, having seen the importance of the work, exhorted believers "that with full purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord." Additions continued to come in; and Barnabas, feeling the need of help, went to Tarsus for his friend, Saul, who seems to have been spending a time of retirement at his home. He brought Saul to Antioch, and "a whole year they gathered together in the assembly and taught a great crowd." (See Greek.) They conducted those services as men called of God and approved by the Church; but the official word for preaching is not applied to their work. At the end of that year they were sent to the brethren in Judea, with the aid from

Antioch. When they returned, Acts xii, 25, a church-court convened, the title of which is not given. It was not composed of local members of that church, as will be seen presently. The history is very brief, and probably many particulars are omitted. The writer, Luke, as was usual with him, seems to have been more intent upon giving the main facts and results. Basing upon ascertained facts, our reading of Acts xiii, 1, is: "Now there were at Antioch (*κατα την ουσαν εκκλησιαν*—kata tên ousan ekklêsian), in the presence of the church, convened certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon," etc. Following records indicate that the "certain prophets and teachers" had come to Antioch and were assembled for ecclesiastical business, in the presence of the Church there. Recent events had made Antioch a point of unusual interest to all the Church. After Barnabas had been sent from Jerusalem certain "prophets" had come; see Acts xi, 27. They were religious teachers; for in the New Testament the term is not confined to those who foretold the future, but was applied to anyone gifted in teaching the Word of God. Silas was a preacher of the gospel; but in Acts xv, 32, he and Judas are called "prophets"; and in 1 Corinthians xiv, (Paul's chapter on rules for church-services,) the public teachers are called "prophets." The names (at least in part) of the "certain prophets and teachers" at Antioch were, Barnabas of Jerusalem, Saul of Tarsus, Simeon, called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen and Agabus (xi, 28), and there were other "prophets" from Jerusalem, possibly present, though not mentioned. These latter had come there but a little time before the court assembled, and may have remained; but we do not assert it. The court was convened for a purpose which is described as "*λειτουργουντων δε αυτων τῳ κυριῳ* (leitourgountōn de autōn tō kuriō), ministering to the Lord." We take this to mean, attending to the Lord's work in the interests of His Church. The word *λειτουργεω* (leitourgeō) means "to perform some public service, gratis." It is used in Hebrews x, 11, for the

service of the priests under the Old Dispensation. In our passage it plainly refers to some special, voluntary service of those assembled at Antioch. The words "as they ministered to the Lord" denote their engagement in church business. We judge that this body was not composed of the members of the local church at Antioch; for, as just seen, those acting in it were from other places. The court was not in session when Saul and Barnabas returned from their mission tour; nor was it called together by them. But they assembled the church, and rehearsed what the Lord had done for them (as our returned missionaries often do). We read that after this, "they abode a long time with the disciples."

We note that it was nŏt the Church, but the court which engaged in fasting, prayer, and ministering to the Lord; and only the court received the message to (*αφοριζω*, aphorizō) set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto the Holy Spirit had called them. Their call was from the Holy Spirit, and was clear and positive; and they had been fully approved by the Church. Yet, as all the indications say, they took no step in official work until they were solemnly set apart by the laying on of the hands of that court according to the Holy Spirit's special command. They awaited their ordination to the work; for, as the history shows, neither had preached officially. From this we judge that even those, who are undoubtedly called of God, should receive the official sanction of God's Church which they are to serve before they claim public recognition as preachers of the gospel. (See our Chapters XXII and XXXV.) God attaches great importance to His Church; and in no record does He allow us to think that He will ever disparage its ordinances before men, or that men may choose, of themselves, to enter His ministry. (Our Chapter XXXVI.) But was not Saul an Apostle, called of the Lord? He was; and as such he had preached a little at Damascus; but he had never come before the public in the rôle of a regularly ordained minister. And why was he waiting? and what

was he doing at his home in Tarsus? Evidently it was known that he was there, for thither Barnabas went seeking him. As an Apostle, he needed no human call nor human recognition. No human, nor any mere ecclesiastical authority could ordain an Apostle to his work as a witness for the risen Christ. (Our Chapter XXXIV.) Paul shows his appreciation of this in Galatians i, etc. Yet though he did (κηρυσσω—kêrussō) preach once—perhaps several times—at Damascus as an authorized witness for Jesus as the Christ, he afterwards withdrew from public preaching; and then only spoke and taught as occasion demanded until the call to ordination at Antioch. Then he was ordained, not as an Apostle, but as a preacher of the gospel. There is a great difference between these two offices. An Apostle was not necessarily a preacher of the gospel; but his special mission was to testify out of his own personal knowledge, to the actual resurrection of Christ. The gospel minister need never to have seen the risen Christ; for his mission was and is to preach the faith of the gospel. At Jerusalem, Paul was with the two Apostles, Peter and James (Acts ix, 26–30; Galatians i, 18, 19), going in and out with them, "(παῤῥησιαζομενος — parhrêsiazomenos) speaking boldly" in the name of the Lord. He also "(ελαλει-τε και συνηζητει, elalei–te kai sunêzêtei) talked and discussed" with the Grecians at Jerusalem. But only once is the official word for preaching, (κηρυσσω—kêrussō) used to tell what he did before his ordination at Antioch; and until that event it was never applied at all to the work of Barnabas (Acts xi, 19–26 and xiii, 1–3.). As to Saul, compare Acts ix, Galatians i and ii. Our study is this:

(1.) In Acts ix, 1–19, is the history of Saul's conversion to Jesus as the Christ.

(2.) In Galatians i, 15–17, we see that he retired to Arabia as soon as he was able to travel. This is one of the details omitted by Luke, in his summary of facts, Acts ix.

(3.) Saul returned from Arabia to Damascus; Galatians i, 17; and preached; see Acts ix, 20–25. How long

he was then at Damascus is not known. Luke says that "after many days" he had to flee for his life.

(4.) Three years afterwards Saul went to Jerusalem to see Peter and James, and was introduced to the "disciples" there by Barnabas. There he became involved in controversy with the Grecians about Jesus as the Christ, and was so successful against his opponents that, as at Damascus, they sought his life. Then the brethren sent him away, first to Cesarea, and from there to Tarsus, where he remained in comparative seclusion until Barnabas sought aid for Antioch; compare Acts ix, 26–30; Galatians i, 18–20; Acts xi, 19–26, in order. Barnabas received recognition of his "gifts" from the church at Jerusalem; and both he and Saul received the same recognition at Antioch. There the Holy Spirit called for the ordination of both; and then they both became public, authorized preachers of the Gospel.

Saul's status, as a gospel minister, is distinct from his apostolic office, and from that of any other Apostle. He did more preaching than all the rest of the Apostles combined, if we may judge by the records. He calls himself not only an Apostle, but says, as no other Apostle does: I am a preacher of the gospel—"ordained a preacher"; 1 Timothy ii, 7. In 2 Timothy i, 11, he says that he was "appointed a preacher and an Apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." So he had three offices. In these passages the same word in the Greek is used for "ordain" and "appoint," τιθημι (tithêmi). It means "to put, place, lay upon, etc.; see Acts vi, 6, where the Apostles set apart the seven men to manage the distribution at Jerusalem.

Barnabas and Saul being sent forth as fully ordained preachers, ministered first to the Jews, and were rejected by them. Then they turned to the Gentiles. They worked as equals, for their ordination was equal; and it was apart from Saul's office as an Apostle. No word shows that being an Apostle ever gave him any superiority in that preaching work. Indeed the name of Barnabas often

comes first in the records. As Luke was the historian, this cannot be ascribed to Saul's modesty.

During that preaching tour, "they ordained them (the people) elders in every church" which they established, Acts xiv, 23. But the word here translated "ordain" is not that of the other passages; but it is χειροτονεω (cheirotoneō), meaning to "stretch out the hand" as in voting; "to vote for, to elect;" also "to lay hands on, to ordain, appoint, constitute."

In 2 Corinthians viii, 19, Paul used this word in speaking of the brother who was "chosen" by the churches to travel with him. It is variously used to embrace both ordination and election. And we find several other Greek words in the common version which are translated by "chosen, ordain," etc. As to these two ministers, it is clear that they had received authority to organize churches and ordain elders in them.

In 1 Timothy iv, 14, Paul wrote to Timothy: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy '(μετα επιθεσεως—meta epitheseōs) with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

In 1 Timothy i, 18, he writes: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies (προαγουσας—proagousas) going before on thee"; or, as to thee. Doubtless this is reference to the predictions made about Timothy, by those among whom he grew to manhood. They had known him from his childhood, and had been witnesses of the pious training his mother, Eunice, had given him, (2 Timothy i, 5) and they had recognized the rich promise in his character and gifts. He had good testimony from his home-people at Derbe, at Lystra, and at Icónium; see Acts xvi, 1, 2. The remembrance of those expectations and predictions of his friends, was to stimulate him in his life as a minister of the gospel. The "gift" in 1 Timothy iv, 14, was undoubtedly from God. In 2 Timothy i, 6, Paul plainly calls it "the gift of God." It was not bestowed by "the laying on of

the hands of the presbytery;" but that act was the official recognition of the fact that Timothy possessed the gift, already. *The presbytery could give it to him only as the open acknowledgment of approval.* "The laying on of hands" was the representative act of the Church bestowing upon him the right to preach the gospel as an ordained minister, recognized as called of God. Therefore, Paul used the words: "Which was given thee by prophecy (predictions of those who knew him well), (*meta*) with," or in addition to, "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Again: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which (εδοθη—edothê) was given thee by prophecy." This word, "edothê," is from διδωμι (didōmi), and has many significations. In Matthew x, 19, Mark xiii, 11, it denotes suggestions which would be given to the disciples in hours of trial when called to witness for Christ. In 2 Corinthians xii, 7, Paul used it for the impression upon him of a life-long trouble, called "a thorn in the flesh." In Timothy's case, we suppose the meaning to be that God's bestowal of the gift upon him was suggested and impressed through the predictions of those who knew him.

The formal word, for ordination, is τιθημι (tithêmi); and επιτιθημι (epitithêmi) expresses the action of the court in the laying on of hands. As already seen, the word χειροτονεω (cheirotoneō) denotes the acts of election and ordination, both; but "tithêmi" and "epitithêmi," do not point to any human election to office. They are used to indicate the recognition of election of God. The words in 2 Timothy i, 6, 7, undoubtedly refer to Timothy's ordination by "the presbytery" as recorded in 1 Timothy iv, 14. In saying: "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands," Paul makes the equivalent of an assertion that he was a member of the presbytery by which Timothy was ordained, and was one of those who laid hands on him. That he should seem to make it a personal matter, is not strange; for who does not know the exceptionally close and tender relations which existed between the two men?

He called him "my own son in the faith." It is not impossible that, when Paul laid his hands upon the young man's head, the yearning of his great love for him, together with a deep sense of his own responsibility for Timothy's entrance into the ministry may have so impressed him as to make him forget the presence of other members of the presbytery; see Acts xvi, 1–3.

To Titus (i, 5,) Paul wrote: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that (*επιδιορθοω*—epidiorthoō) thou mightest further set to rights the things that (*λειπω*—leipō) are deficient, and (*καταστησης*—katastêsês) mightest constitute elders in every city, as I directed thee." In Acts xxvii, 7–21, we see that Paul's voyage to Rome took him by Crete. They "came unto a place which is called The Fair Havens, nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea," which was a maritime city of Crete; and "much time was spent" there. No doubt Paul went ashore and utilized the delay by introducing the gospel; but he had not time to complete the organization of churches. The mission of Titus, whom he left there, was to perfect the work. It seems as if Paul had not found fit men for elders, in his brief stay. In 1 Timothy v, 22, is an intimation that he deemed hasty action unwise and hurtful; and in Titus i, 12, 13, is evidence that he had not the highest confidence in the Cretians.

While the history shows, in several places, that an ordained minister may proceed to have elders elected and ordained, we do not find that any one minister ever ordained another minister to the gospel work. By the evidence in the records, only a court of the Church can give ordination to a preacher of the gospel.

The plurality of elders in every city and church, is a plain fact in the records; Acts iv, 5, 23; xi, 30; xiv, 23; xx, 17; xxii, 5; Titus i, 5; James v, 14, etc. In Acts xxii, 5, "presbuterion" is rendered "the estate of the elders," and in 1 Timothy iv, 14, it is translated "presbytery." The church courts governed the Church. We find no one Apostle, preacher nor elder doing so. No

one man may be placed, nor place himself, as a lord or superior over God's Church, or any part of it. As the records teach, this is, also, a part of God's own idea of His Church.

There is frequent mention, in other records, of the laying on of hands, and for various purposes; Matthew xix, 13–15; Mark vi, 5; viii, 23–25; Luke iv, 40; xiii, 13; Acts viii, 14–17; ix, 12–17; xix, 6; xxviii, 8.

There is no record showing that members were received into the Church by any such act. The form belonged only to the working of miracles; the imparting of the gifts of the Spirit; the pronouncing of blessings; the ordination of officers of the Church, and as indicated in the passages to which reference has been made.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHURCH COURTS.

The Sanhedrin—Rulers—First Officers—Only one church court named. Disturbance at Antioch about circumcising the Gentiles—The question sent to a court at Jerusalem—Samaritans—Jews and circumcision. Apostles and elders were equals—The Antioch question decided—Concessions—No independency in the Gentiles—A lesson for the Church.

A "COUNCIL" is mentioned in several places (as in Matthew v, 22; xxvi, 59; Luke xxii, 66, and elsewhere,) which was clearly a body of authority. The Greek word so translated, is *συνέδριον* (sunedrion) and is usually called "the Sanhedrin." We cannot discover that this court had divine origin. It was a body which assumed jurisdiction over the affairs of the Church and of the State; and was composed of men prominent in both. But the records show that its members were not, distinctly, of the eldership; for here and there we read of the chief priests and elders appealing to this council, which indicates that it was the body of higher authority than they. We cannot find its origin in the Bible. Some have supposed it to have been founded in the appointment, by Moses, of the aids for judging Israel, mentioned in Exodus xviii. But we cannot tell. This council was thoroughly Jewish, and was opposed to Jesus in all respects. It was not of the church; therefore we dismiss it from further notice.

The officers of the reformed Church were, first, Apostles and elders; then a distinct order of preachers who were classed with elders, as in 1 Timothy v, 17: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." By these words it is seen that these were not of a superior order, but of the general class of elders. All elders (Greek literal)

"who take the lead well" were to be "counted worthy of double honor"; but those elders laboring in "word and (διδασκαλια—didaskalia) the work of teaching" were to be held in special consideration. They were still "elders," but added to ruling in the Church, the work of definite preaching of the gospel. So we understand the meaning to be. This is the only approach to anything like superiority in office which we are able to discover. But this is not a warrant for individual superiority. It is only "the reward of merit" to him who is specially faithful and efficient in the discharge of duty. Besides elders (sometimes called "bishops"), who were evidently the highest officers in the Church, we find no other officers, after Apostles, except "deacons." The work of elders, as rulers in the Church, is our subject here. Only one ecclesiastical court has a name in the records,—the "presbuterion," which word is sometimes translated "elders," "estate of the elders," but was translated "presbytery," in the history of Paul's work. This court, as we saw, ordained Timothy. From that example of its duties we may argue that it also ordained others, though no mention is made of their cases as of Timothy's. The records do not, as all can realize, give more than an essential outline of what was done during the time covered by them. It is not to be doubted that matters affecting the Church would be under the oversight of this court. An illustration of this is seen in Acts xv, where we find an un-named church court in session and deciding a question of vital interest. Though its title is not given, its composition was that of the "presbuterion," 1 Timothy iv, 14. Under the Old Dispensation, priests and elders were constantly associated in God's service; and so we find them to the time of the opening of the New Dispensation. After that, the priests have, in some degree, their counterpart in the elders "who labor in word and the work of teaching." In the court of Acts xv, we find Apostles and elders associated. The history of this court is of great interest; and it confirms some of our preceding studies in a most striking

manner—we mean particularly, those relating to the oneness of the Church.

When Saul and Barnabas returned from their mission tour, Acts xiv, 26–28, they remained during some time at Antioch. While there, "certain men from Judea came down teaching the brethren, Unless ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." This teaching created a great disturbance. Paul (who was then called Saul,) and Barnabas took part in the discussion following; and we see that though Paul was an Apostle, he had no power to settle the controversy. It is clear that the Christians of that day did not regard the Apostles as of superior authority, or this matter would have been ended then and there by the decision of Paul. As we show in another place, Apostles had no extra authority in the Church; but the elders were their equals as rulers in the Church in every respect. Paul's teachings contain full recognition of this fact, and Peter's also; e. g., 1 Timothy v, 1; 1 Peter v, 1. The conclusion reached, at Antioch, was that Paul, Barnabas, and representatives of the congregation "should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and elders about this question." (In Galatians ii, we see that Paul, afterwards made a second visit to Jerusalem; and that then also there was much discussion of this question. But at that time he had Titus with him as an "object lesson." The same result was reached in both visits.)

The assembling of the court, at Jerusalem, was caused by the reference of the question to "the Apostles and elders"; for we read: "And the Apostles and elders (*συνηχθησαν*—sunêchthêsan) convened to see about this matter." As the representatives from Antioch passed through Phenicia and Samaria, they told of "the conversion of the Gentiles." It will be remembered that the dispersed Christians (Acts viii) "went everywhere (*ευαγγελιζομενοι*, euaggelizomenoi) announcing the glad tidings—the Word." Philip, also, "(*εκηρυσσεν*—ekêrussen) preached to them the Christ." (Our Chapter XXXV.) Evidently churches had

been organized in those sections. Peter and John had preached the gospel in many villages on their return from Samaria, Acts viii, 25. But what proportion of the Christians in those districts was Jewish, cannot be known. Probably it was small, for Jews and Samaritans had little intercourse. Samaria once belonged to Israel, and its chief city was built by Omri, king of Israel; 1 Kings xvi, 23, 24. But about two centuries afterwards, Shalmanesar, king of Assyria, captured it and nearly depopulated the country by carrying the Jews into permanent captivity. Their country was given to Assyrian settlers, 2 Kings xvii; Ezra iv; Nehemiah ii, 20. This explains the feud always existing between Jews and Samaritans, for the latter were the descendants of those Gentile Assyrians. In 2 Kings xvii, 24–35, we are told how Jewish customs and faith were introduced among the Samaritans. This reference to the old history is not a digression; but it is a way to an introduction to the "brethren" of Acts xv, 3. We needed to know who they were, and now we see that they were Gentiles, or the children of the Assyrians. Though the Samaritans practiced circumcision, they were not of Jewish lineage, and were never recognized as a part of the Old Dispensation Church, therefore when they accepted Christ they were baptized. We see in Matthew x, 5, 6, that our Lord did not regard them as of "the house of Israel." Had they been Jews we do not think that Simon Magus would have been so popular among them with his sorceries; see Leviticus xix; xx; Deuteronomy xviii. When the representatives from Antioch reached Jerusalem, after their long journey, they met a most cordial reception from the Church, and the Apostles and elders to whom they told "all things that God had done by them." But "there rose up (at Jerusalem) certain of the Pharisees which believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them (the Gentiles of Antioch), and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." That was repetition of the Jewish teaching at Antioch. No doubt those converted Jews felt towards the converted Gentiles of their day as we

feel towards the heathen now, and regarded circumcision as we look upon baptism; that is (while they were in grossest error in supposing the rite necessary to salvation, Acts xv, 1,), they considered it to be the initiatory rite of admission to membership in the covenanted Church. The dispute was about what should be done to the Gentiles when they were received into the Church of Christ, of which those believing Jews were already members. It is beyond question, if we judge those Jews by their own words, that they stood in their circumcision as members of the Church; for there they are, contending that those who joined the Church of Christ must be circumcised as they had been. Moreover, they were of the very organization in which the Apostles and elders of Christ were the rulers; and they are shown to have been of the local church which welcomed the representatives from Antioch. Because they stood accepted in their circumcision, they thought that all who joined their Church should also be circumcised. It is also plain that they still held to other "customs of Moses," though they had accepted Jesus as the Christ, and so kept their place in His Church. We see, too, that converted Jews did not "so much as dream" that the new rite, baptism, was ever sent to be received by them in their acceptance of Jesus. They had accepted Him as the Christ; yet not one shadow of a thought appears among them about baptism for the Jews. Does not this confirm our conclusions as to the Pentecostal converts? (Our Chapter XXI.)

The court before which the question from Antioch was laid, is the only one whose proceedings are described with any fullness. As we examine it, we find that it was composed of church officers only, acting in the presence of the Church, or congregation. The record says: "The Apostles and elders came together for to consider this matter." The appeal was sent only "unto the Apostles and elders" (Verse 2). In Acts xvi, 4, the "decrees" are said to have been ordained by "the Apostles and elders." In Acts xv, 22, we read: "Then pleased it the Apostles and elders, with

the whole Church, to choose men out of their company and send them to Antioch." But this does not say that "the whole Church" was of the court. It was here, doubtless, as in Acts vi, where we read that the Apostles told "the multitude of the disciples" to choose from their own number the men who were to manage the business then needing attention. The question from Antioch was entirely within the hands of "the Apostles and elders"; and when their decision was reached the result pleased all the Church, as did the determination to send some of the brethren to Antioch. But the common version of Verse 23 seems contrary to this, for it says: "And they wrote letters by them (those who were to carry the decision) after this manner: The Apostles and elders and brethren send greeting," etc. Yet the "greetings" of the Church might well be included in the epistle apart from any action of the Church, as such, in the proceedings of the court. But the translation is misleading in this verse. The best Greek—having Tischendorf, Tragelles, Lachman, with Westcott and Hort, all as its approvers—says: "The Apostles and *the elder-brethren* send greeting." (And Greisbach shows his leaning to this reading, by his sign "——→.") The meaning is, that the Apostles and the elders were "brethren," and that the "brother elders" united with the Apostles in sending the letters.

The "decrees" were sent to the local churches throughout the disturbed region, and to Antioch especially. They were sent (*φυλασσειν*—phulassein) to be obeyed and observed, Acts xvi, 4.

But what authority had that court at Jerusalem to make laws for all the Churches? It might have decided for Antioch, because that Church had made the request; but how could it presume to decide for other sections? Under authority of that court, Paul, taking Silas with him, went through Syria and Cilicia "(*επιστηριζων*—epistêrizōn) causing to rest, settling, quieting the churches," Acts xv, 41. Then they came to Derbe and Lystra, finding Timothy and

taking him along; "and as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees, to be observed, that were (κεκριμενα—kekrimena) decided upon by the Apostles and elders in Jerusalem." Therefore the churches "(εστερεουντο, estereounto) were quieted, or strengthened in the faith and increased in number, daily," Acts xvi, 1–5.

At Antioch (Acts xv, 30, 31), "They rejoiced (επι τη παρακλησει—epi tê paraklêsei) at the instructive exhortation." Those decisions were everywhere received as a final and authoritative settling of the troublesome question. But how could all this be if there was not a complete bond of union holding those various local churches together. Everything has the appearance of a satisfied and visible oneness, in accord with Galatians iii, 28.

It is to be noted that neither in that court, nor elsewhere did the Apostles act as the superiors of the elders, or assume any extra authority.

The question to be decided was a most serious one, being of vital interest to the whole Church. Conflicting views were threatening wide-spread trouble, and the Church was in danger of a great schism. Soon there would have been Jewish and Gentile "denominations" warring upon each other. We do not wonder that the court at Jerusalem was well attended. As the representatives from Antioch passed through Phenicia and Samaria, all the Churches learned the nature of their mission; and, naturally, every local church would desire to be represented; for the question affected the peace of the Church in all its parts. Thus the apparently large number is accounted for. In Acts xv, 25, we are told how they assembled: "It seemed good to us, (see Greek) having come together with one accord." This indicates that a sufficient notice was given, so that all who were due could be present in time. The discussion was long and earnest. There was much (συζητησεως—suzêtêseōs) discussion. Peter spoke in opposition to the Jewish demand though himself a strict Jew and "the Apostle to the Jews;" see Galatians ii, 7. Next, Paul and Barnabas

told what "signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." These were followed by that Jew of Jews, James, whose argument brought the discussion to a satisfactory conclusion. Approving what Peter had said, he showed how God's plans had always embraced the Gentiles; and he interpreted the words of Amos ix, 11, 12, as a special prophecy on that point. Doubtless this had great effect on the Jewish hearers, for the Jews held the prophecies in great esteem. In the light of James' interpretation they saw how, from of old, God had intended to reconcile all things in Christ. James closed his speech by offering a resolution, which was unanimously adopted, Acts xv, 19–21. The policy adopted was conciliatory, and concessional for both parties. In urging it James said: "For Moses (εκ-γενεων αρχαιων—ek-geneōn archaiōn) from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." Therefore, Jewish Christians would be offended by any disrespect shown to their cherished laws; and anything which could be so construed must be avoided by the Gentiles. On the other hand, Jews were not to make any attempts to impose Mosaism upon the Gentiles. All this met the approval of both parties to the discussion. But in submitting their case to a court composed so largely of Jews, and held in the very citadel of Judaism, we see that the Gentiles had not one thought of independent church existence. It is evident that they regarded themselves as having been received into the Church where Jews, as the original members, had the most rights and experience. We say they may have felt thus. Jewish preachers and other Jewish Christians had brought them the gospel in the first place; therefore, it was natural that they should look to their teachers for further guidance.

A lesson coming from the history is this: Sometimes it may be duty to God, and for the best interests of the Church to renounce views which were adopted through educational influences, no matter how long they have been

held, or how fondly cherished. It is just what Peter, James, and other Jews had to do, in the right decision of the question which had been submitted to them.

Of course we Gentiles feel that they only acted as they ought to have done. They did! But it could have been no small thing with them to abandon the traditions of their fathers, and the faith and manners they had learned as sacred, even from their childhood. Let him who doubts the fact of the sacrifice, the real "crucifixion of feeling," imagine himself in the place of those Jews, and then try his own heart! We speak of this as an illustration of the temper in which God would have His Church to be. In the history recorded in Acts x and xi, we can see how God had shown them their duty of burying all prejudices for the sake of the gospel's prosperity and for the salvation of the world. We have thought much of the circumstances of those Jewish Christians; and we realize somewhat of the sacrifice they were called to make. Under conviction of duty to God and His Church they made it; and we do not doubt that, in the sight and acceptance of God, it was more pleasing than all the thousands of burnt-offerings upon Israel's altars. Having made a careful, honest study of the question brought to them, they decided it justly, because they put loyalty to God and His Church above every selfish and personal consideration. We have no words in which to express our admiration of the conduct of the members of that court! True, one may say: "They only did their duty." It is so. But we have been wondering if the Church of today would come from such an ordeal, as pure? There we see God's idea of what His Church should be, after receiving any revelation of His will. The action was in the spirit which ruled Peter when he asked "What was I, that I could withstand God?" From the Jewish standpoint, that court reversed the whole God-directed past, as when Peter was sent to Cornelius. Yet it was proved that the reversal was really the highest type of obedience to God's own idea of His Church.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

APOSTLES AND PERMANENT OFFICERS.

Apostles considered—Mathias not indorsed—Paul the successor to Iscariot. Apostolic office temporary—Elders, or bishops—Two spheres of work. Preaching and ruling—The bishop for local work—Christ as a bishop. Deacons—No deaconess—The two Old Testament classes of priests.

WE speak of Apostles, though they were not of the permanent officers of the Church. They are mentioned first in Matthew x, 2; Mark iii, 14; Luke vi, 13. Jesus gave them their title when He called the "twelve" to be with Him. The ultimate purpose of their appointment was that they might be "*witnesses*" to the facts of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; Luke xxiv, 48; John xv, 27; Acts i, 8. And it has often seemed strange to us that these men could have so utterly lost sight of the promise of resurrection, when Jesus died. But we have thought that it was so ordered; for testimony coming out of the despair arising from a perfect knowledge of His death, is of the most valuable kind. This, however, is not of our present studies. Those who wish to see the discussion of this subject, can do so by getting a copy of our little book entitled "Doubts."*

The records explain the mission of the Apostles; see Acts i, 22; ii, 32; iii, 15; iv, 33; x, 39–41; xiii, 31; xxii, 15; xxvi, 16, 22, 23; 1 Peter v, 1. In Acts x, 39–41, Peter taught that all the people of the time were not chosen as witnesses; but only those to whom the risen Lord was manifested in a special manner, or, as he declared, "witnesses chosen before of God; to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." None others could fill this office, as all the records show. Therefore, the

* It can be ordered from the Author, Bluefield, W. Va.

apostleship could not be permanent in the Church. The conditions were of such kind that none could succeed to the office. This must be so unless the risen Lord should appear to some in each generation, as to Saul of Tarsus. An apostle must have seen the risen Jesus with his own eyes; and he must have been specially and divinely appointed by the Lord in person. Those who will examine the records will see that not even the Holy Spirit ever called anyone to this office, and that there is no promise, nor other intimation that He would give such a call. This is beyond denial.

Partly because of the above considerations, we hold the election of Mathias in strong suspicion; indeed it is more than suspicion, for we are convinced that his election was illegal; see Acts i. Jesus did not choose and call him, either before or after the resurrection. But, He did, personally, call every Apostle, including Saul of Tarsus. Mathias was elected by men, and because Peter argued that someone must fill the place of Judas Iscariot, applying to him the words of Psalms lxix, 25 and cix, 8. But he neither had nor claimed any revelation from the risen Lord, nor any inspiration of the Holy Spirit as to who the prophesied successor was to be. The simple historical record of that election is not an evidence that God accepted what was done; and there is no other evidence that He did accept it. On the contrary, the choice of Saul of Tarsus afterwards, by the risen Lord, is proof that Mathais was not accepted. Peter, ever impulsive, "forced" the election upon the other disciples. Justus and Mathias were nominated. Had there been a third man, the result might have had more the appearance of divine ordering when all the choice fell on one. But, there were only the two; and, as a matter of course, one was likely to be elected. The "lot" fell on Mathias, and that is the last we ever hear of him. He is never known among the Apostles afterwards, in any mention. That Peter was "out of order" in his motion to elect, his own words should have taught him; for in Acts x,

he said the Apostles were "chosen of God." But, possibly, there was Peter correcting Peter; for he said that some years later. It is not the only time that his errors had to be corrected when he acted upon his own impulses. We ascribe the election to God only in so far as He chose to permit it to proceed and come to its natural result. There is no proof that He otherwise interfered. There was also a dangerous precedent in that action, had not the Lord set it aside in the call of Saul of Tarsus. For if men could take liberty to choose Apostles as successors to those who died, the practice and office might both grow beyond original intentions and limits; and thus an unscriptural order might be permanently established in the Church—an order which Peter, himself would have condemned by the time that he reached the house of Cornelius, Acts x, 39–42. In no record, even to the last book (Revelation xxi, 14), is the Lord's chosen number, "twelve," ever exceeded. But had Mathias been accepted of God, the number would have been thirteen.

Paul's assertions, taken in connection with his positive, personal call by the risen Lord, we regard as conclusive evidence that he was the divinely-chosen substitute for Judas Iscariot; Acts xxii, 14, 15; 1 Corinthians ix, 1, etc. All that the Apostles say of themselves and all that is said to and of them, should be convincing proof that their office and its occupancy had two special limitations and characteristics:

I. An Apostle must have seen the risen Lord with his own eyes, so that his witnessing would be based upon actual, personal knowledge. This, or he would not be a competent witness. The best "hearsay evidence" would not suffice, or there might be many thousands of Apostles.

II. An Apostle must have had an immediate, personal call from the risen Lord, himself. No one must be able to say of him: "You are an Apostle by the will of man." How many times did Paul base his right to apostleship in "the will of God"? 2 Corinthians i, 1; Ephesians i, 1; Colossians

i, 1; 2 Timothy i, 1. And in Galatians i, 1, he is yet more emphatic, saying: "Paul, an Apostle, not of men, neither by man; but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him from the dead."

The first of these essentials Mathias may have had; but there is no indication at all that he had the second.

Temporarily, the Apostles stood where none others could or can stand, in the possession of these two essentials. They were also the first preachers of the gospel in the reformed Church; and the spiritual care of all the Church was, for awhile, committed to them. But what was to be, after they had passed away by death? We have shown that the "Great Commission" was the warrant for transmitting the preaching and the management of the Church to others, in after times. The Apostles were to teach others, as the Lord said, "whatsoever I have commanded you." Thus He commanded them to teach others to preach, as He had taught them; but there was no provision for perpetuating the apostolic office. We may believe that they were diligent in obeying the Lord (and see 2 Peter i, 13–15); for before their death other preachers arose, as Philip, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, etc. That these and their successors in all ages might know what the Lord had commanded, the Apostles not only taught those who were of their day, but put the divine commands and doctrines upon record. So Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, and through them to all following generations. The "faith and manners" of the Church are to be learned in the several records of the one gospel and in the Epistles of the New Testament, in connection with the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and this is the whole of what is left of the apostleship. It would be a hurtful error to suppose that there was any peculiar sanctity or authority in the Apostles, which needed to be transmitted to after generations. That Peter was permitted to fall; and that Judas Iscariot should betray his Lord, may be on record to make us realize that, after all, the Apostles were but men, used for a time as

instruments in the divine service. Apart from the direct, personal choosing by our Lord, they were in no way superior to others, serving under different titles. That their office was not essential to the future of the Church, and so was not to be permanent, is seen in the necessity (and now impossibility) of obtaining the two essentials mentioned above. The Apostles, themselves, never intimated that they expected to have successors in office. Paul gave no such legacy to Timothy, nor to Titus; nor did he ever speak of any such thing. He fitted those two young men to succeed him in the ministry of the gospel, by giving them all needful training and instruction; and he left those prerequisites on record for succeeding generations of the Church. In that we have, now, the benefits of apostolic care; and all can learn how to "behave" themselves in "the house of God"; 1 Timothy iii, 14, 15. In all this is the only "mantle" which, according to the Word of God, is left to fall upon any shoulders, or in which any may be wrapped when called by the Holy Spirit to "labor in word and doctrine." Therefore, Paul wrote to Timothy: "The things that thou hast heard (para) from me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who (ἱκανοι εσονται—hikanoi esontai) shall be fully qualified to teach others also"; 2 Timothy ii, 2. The Epistles, forming the one inspired book of church government, are the only apostolic substitutes.

In seeking the permanent officers of the Church, we find but two classes:

I. *Presbuteros*—Elder, or bishop. Here are not two orders, or classes of officers; but, as the records show, two titles of the same man, indicating the two offices which he holds, and the two classes of duties which he is to perform. From the word "presbuterion" (an assembly of elders) the Presbyterian branch of the Church derives its name. It will be seen, by those who examine the two words, that they differ in only two letters, the "*u*" and the "*o*" of the Greek being substituted by the "*y*" and the "*a*"

of the English word. We presume that the Episcopal branch of the Church derives its name from the other of the two words; for the word "bishop" is, in the Greek, "episkopos," and so it is translated in Philippians i, 1; 1 Timothy iii, 1, 2, and 1 Peter ii, 25. As will be seen, the word means "overseer."

We found elders as spiritual officers in the Church under both dispensations. They were not only the predecessors of the Apostles, but were afterwards their companions and equals as rulers in the Church, as of old they were companions of priests and prophets. In the common version, the word "(επισκοπος—episkopos) bishop" appears for the first time, in Philippians i, 1. That epistle is addressed: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus * * * with the (episkopois) bishops and deacons." We notice that both words are in the plural number which shows that there were several bishops and deacons in that church at Philippi. We also find that these officers were servants of the local churches within the bounds of which they resided. Bishops were the "overseers of the flock," and the deacons were to serve as the general interests of their churches required. In the Greek of Acts xx, 28, the word "episkopos" is first used in the New Testament, and again in the plural number. There it is translated "overseers," in the common version. From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the (presbuteroi) elders of that local church. When they came, he told them, among other things: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you (episkopous) overseers (or, as translated in Philippians i, 1, etc., "bishops"), to feed the church of God." There can be no doubt that this was an exhortation to care for the local church at Ephesus. These (presbuteroi) elders were to do the local work in that church as (episkopoi) overseers, or bishops. Thus the two titles are seen to be interchangeable and to have been borne by the same men. The (presbuteroi) elders of Acts xx, 17 are called (episkopoi) overseers, or bishops, in Verse 28. As there is nothing to the

contrary in any record, we conclude that it was in all the local churches as at Ephesus and Philippi.

Both Peter and John called themselves "(presbuteroi) elders"; yet we do not find that they had the charge of any local churches. As Apostles, they were the Lord's witnesses to the whole world, wherever they might go. Peter was an active member of the church court at Jerusalem, as we have seen. So we find Apostles as (presbuteroi) elders; and Apostles and elders ruling together in a church court; but neither in that court, nor in any other to which reference is made, is there an indication that any sat as "bishops." The "bishop" does not appear, in any record, as a ruler in the Church. What are we to conclude from this? In the court of Acts xv "Apostles, elders, and the church-brethren" are spoken of; but there is no reference to "bishops," or overseers. This fact must have a meaning of some kind, surely.

We now place, in due order, the following facts:

(1.) In the court of Acts xv, the Apostles Peter, Paul, and James, took active part in the discussions about the government of the church, as equals with elders.

(2.) In the court of Acts xv, the elders took an active part in the discussions about the government of the Church, as equals with Apostles.

(3.) No records indicate that any, as (episkopoi) bishops, or overseers, ever sat in any church court, or took any part in the government of the Church at large. The evidence is, that they acted only in the local churches.

(4.) In Acts xx, the (presbuteroi) elders, were exhorted to attend as (episkopoi) bishops, or overseers, to the duties of caring for the local, or home church at Ephesus, where they resided.

Such are the simple facts, and we can find nothing contrary to them or which changes them in any manner. Therefore, we are bound to conclude that the (presbuteroi) elders were the rulers and representatives in the Church, and that they acted as such in the courts of the Church; but

that as (episkopoi) *bishops, or overseers*, the elders were to shepherd their local, or home churches. That is, as "elder" this officer of two titles was to rule and teach in the Church at home and abroad; but as "bishop," or overseer, his duties were bounded by the local church in which he lived.

The character to be borne by the "bishop" is stated in 1 Timothy iii, 1–7. In 1 Timothy v, 17, that is said of the "elders" which is nowhere said of the "bishops," namely: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in word and (διδασκαλια—didaskalia) the work (or office) of teaching." Thus we see that the "elder" both rules and teaches as a public officer of the Church; but the "bishop" is not known to the records outside of his local congregation.

In Titus i, 5, a plurality of elders is mentioned as in every city; and in every church, in Acts xiv, 23.

In Titus i, 5, 7, the "elder" of Verse 5 is the "bishop" of Verse 7. This proves that one man held the two offices.

Paul says, in 1 Timothy v, 17, 18: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward."

These words not only show, as already noted, that the elders were public teachers, or preachers of the gospel, but that those engaged in such work were to be cared for in the way of a livelihood by the churches which they served. We read in 1 Thessalonians v, 12, 13: "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves."

In each passage the word "labour" is κοπιαω (kopiaō) in the Greek, and means "to be wearied or spent with labour." In John iv, 38; 1 Corinthians xv, 10; Philippians ii, 16; Colossians i, 29, etc., the word is definitely

applied to the work of preaching the gospel. There can, then, be no doubt as to Paul's meaning in speaking of the "labour" of the "elders." While some of them, indeed all, are to "bishop" the local churches under their charge, there are those among them who do more. They "labour in word and the work of teaching"—are public preachers of the gospel in addition to the local work as "bishops" and the duties of rulers in the Church at large.

This, therefore, is God's idea as to His Church, in the matters before us here: The office of elder is the highest in the Church; and the office of "bishop" is, as compared with it, limited and secondary.

Whether considering these men as elders or bishops, we find a plurality of them in every local church; and the plurality has equality added to it in the limited work in the local churches, and in the courts of the Church at large. Whether as elders or bishops they ruled and worked in conjunction as equals. Not in one instance does any officer appear as the superior of his brethren in office.

[Note.—In many Bibles, records appear at the end of 2 Timothy and Titus, stating that Timothy was the first bishop of the church at Ephesus, and that "Titus was the first bishop of the church of the Cretians." These are human additions, and are of no authority as parts of God's Word.]

In 1 Peter ii, 25, our Lord is called "the shepherd and bishop" of souls. As a title of pre-eminence this is His alone. All souls of His people are under His care; and He is the One Superior in all His Church. But the title, in this place, is not used to denote His headship over the Church as such. The application is only to His care over the individual souls of all His people throughout the world, see 1 Peter v, 1–4.

II. *Diakonos*—Deacon. This word means "one who renders service to another, an attendant, a servant," etc. Deacons are of the second class of officers in the Church of the New Dispensation. In the singular and plural, the

word occurs five times in the common version; see Philippians i, 1; 1 Timothy iii, 8, 10, 12, 13. In the Greek it is applied to anyone, no matter, whom, who serves or ministers. In the Greek of Romans xv, 8, it is applied to our Lord as "a minister of the circumcision." In Romans xvi, 1, 2, (common version) Phebe is called "a servant of the Church which is at Cenchrea." The Greek calls her "a deacon." The passage is this: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a (*διακονον*—diakonon) servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also."

She is not represented as holding the "office of deacon," but as engaged in some mission to the Church, or the brethren at Rome; and Paul simply commended her as one worthy of assistance "in whatsoever business" called for the visit to Rome. It was as now, when a private member of any church goes abroad and is commended to the brethren in the places visited. No record intimates that she held "the office of deacon." The "deaconess" is not known to the Bible; and one would think in reading 1 Timothy iii, 8–13, that a woman was excluded from that office. Paul's female fellow-workers were not official preachers, nor officers in the Church, Philippians iv, 3. (Our next chapter.) Whatever the "churches" may deem proper as to "deaconesses," there is no Scriptural authority for such officers.

It is generally thought that the first deacons appear in Acts vi, 1–6. But they are not called "deacons," even in the Greek. They were elected and ordained—not to the "office of deacon"—but to correct and prevent abuses, complained of at the time, in the "daily (*διακονια*—diakonia) ministration," whatever that was. They were called forward by a special, local need. The "business" may have been the right and equal division of the substance contributed for the general use of the Christians at Jerusalem,

Acts iv, 32–37. The records do not state the nature of the duties of "the office of deacon." The meaning of the word may have been considered a sufficient instruction. The doctrine as to deacons is fully stated in 1 Timothy iii, 8–13. If their duties may be inferred from Acts vi, 1–6, and from their title, they are to serve the Church in all matters of business and charity. But nowhere is the deacon spoken of as a ruler in the Church. That the Holy Spirit deemed the office of such great importance as to require much care in the selection of those filling it, may be concluded from the following directions given through Paul, in 1 Timothy iii: "Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. Even so *must their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

These two classes of officers correspond, in some respects, to the two classes of priests in the Levitical service.

(*a.*) Those ordained to full priesthood, of whom it is written in Numbers iv, 3: "From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the (צָבָא tsäbä) sacred service to do the (מְלָאכָה meläkhä) ministry in the tabernacle of the congregation." This was the very highest spiritual office of that age, and about the equivalent of our full ordination to the gospel ministry.

(*b.*) Those to serve the sanctuary, Numbers iv, 23, 30, 43, 47; viii, 24. Of these it was written: "All that enter in to perform the service (עָבַד abōd) to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation." And this class was subdivided into two classes, one entering service at thirty, and the other at twenty-five years of age, Chapters iv and viii.

Afterwards king David reduced the age to twenty years, 1 Chronicles xxiii, 24, 27.

We do not know that any of these were advanced to full priesthood. We read: "Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of Jehovah, in the courts and in the chambers, and in the purifying of the holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;" see 1 Chronicles xiii, 28–32.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SCRIPTURAL PREACHER.

The Apostolic successor—Who may administer the ordinances?—God's choosing is to rule—Who may serve?—Words used—The official word. *Κηρυξ*, kêrux—May women act?—The teacher divinely sent to give rules—How to treat his teachings—Women serving—God's choice of preacher—Not a Priest—Ministerial titles—Qualifications of the preacher—The preparation of Jesus—His baptism—Preparation of the Apostles—Essentials—"Apt to teach"—"Not a novice"—"Faithful men"—"Sound words"—Manner, etc.

HERE is the successor to the Apostles in church government; in preaching the gospel, and in all things pertaining to the spiritual management of the Church; but not in apostolic *office*, for that had no successors, as we have seen. Successors, in the first sense, were necessary for the duties of the ministry and other work of the Church; and they are provided for in the eldership. The Church was to be committed to "faithful men, who shall be fully qualified to teach others also." Thus Paul trained Titus and Timothy in "the form of sound words" which they were to "hold fast"; keep sound," and so teach others; 2 Timothy i, 13; Titus i, 9.

To such officers was to be committed the administration of the ordinances of the Church; and there is no indication that any change was to be made. Circumcision and the Passover could be administered by the heads of the families, under the ordaining of God. But baptism and the Lord's Supper are not committed to private hands, but to those to whose keeping Christ, the Head, left His Church. They are the elders of the New Dispensation. This is seen in the circumstances attaching to the administration of these institutions. The records show no administration of them by private persons. They are not essential to salvation, as are

faith and repentance in adults. As to the ministry in the Church, it cannot be that uninspired men shall say who may dispense the ordinances of God, or who may preach the gospel, nor how it ought to be preached. As the Church was created by the will of God, according to His will, and is His own instrumentality for His own service, so should the preacher, the things to be preached, and the manner of preaching them, be subject to the ordering of God. The preacher is of God's own choosing and call, as were the priests of the Old Dispensation, who were "Jehovah's ministers"; Joel i, 9, 13; ii, 17.

In Hebrews v, 4, 5, we are taught that even Christ waited upon the divine appointment. After He entered upon His mission publicly, "he called whom he would and appointed them to be with him," and to preach the gospel; see Mark iii, 13, 14. All Scripture shows how vigilantly this office is to be guarded; and every teaching shows that man may not intrude himself upon God in taking this office of his own wisdom and will. It is God's own idea for His Church. Our reason approves. For if men may choose whom they will have to serve them, and how and with what they will be served, much more may God do so. No man would dare to go forth, unauthorized, to carry on another man's business; or should he do so, he would be disowned and probably prosecuted as an impostor. Men have the acknowledged and law-protected right to guard their business from impositions. It would seem, then, that God's Church ought not to violate His rights, nor encourage the violation of them in any manner.

He organized His Church by calling and covenanting Abraham. He rejected Ishmael, and called Isaac. He rejected Esau, the first-born, and put Jacob in office. He chose Moses out of all Israel. For the priesthood he selected Aaron, and his sons in their generations, guarding their office by the penalty of death to any who intruded upon it. Thus He proceeded to do until "the fulness of time," when under His appointment His Divine Son came

to fill the priestly office, to the exclusion of all others forever. To admit Him legally, He changed the law which had confined the priesthood to the tribe of Levi (Hebrews vii, 11–24), and abolished the Aaronic order in the anointing of Jesus; Matthew iii, 13–17; Acts iv, 27; x, 38. And so did He make an end of all human priesthood, leaving the office to the one Priest of His Church, to the end of the world—the Christ.

He called John the Baptist, and gave him special commission for his work; and so was ever His way until His will was manifested in the calling of the New Testament preachers through Jesus Christ. Then our Lord separated "the twelve" from all other of His disciples, as those whom He would have for Apostles. Under the express commission from the risen Christ, these—Paul having been substituted for Judas—took charge of the Church when it was opened to all nations. Nor were even they permitted to order the affairs of the Church in their own wisdom; for they were put under the abiding control and guidance of the divine Interpreter of the truth and of the Christ—the Holy Spirit; John xiv, 16–18, 26; xvi, 13–15.

The ascended Christ gave Paul special and miraculous call and commission to bear His will for His purchased Church, to the world of the Gentiles; and from this messenger we have laws for the training of "faithful men who shall be fully qualified to teach others also," and these men were to have the Church in charge in all after generations through their trained successors. In view of all this, any intrusion upon the office and duties of the ministry; any act which does not wait upon and conform to the will of God, as thus illustrated and taught, cannot be less than lawlessness! What is to be preached is also of God's ordaining. "All things whatsoever I have commanded you," said our Lord to the first preachers, and through them to their successors; for those were the things which the "all nations" were to be taught "to observe." Even our Lord, himself, took no liberty in His own preaching, as any can

see by reference to such passages as John vii, 14–29; viii, 26–38; xii, 44–50. And so was our divinely-chosen teacher following in the steps of Him who sent him to us, when he said, in 1 Corinthians ii, 1–7, 13: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; * * * Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

The one "Word" has its own divine succession; and through it, only, is the promise that the Spirit shall work unto salvation.

Who, then, may fill this office? The question is a great one; but it presents no difficulties, unless we try to answer it apart from an open Bible. Taking the Word of God as our exclusive source of information the answer is plain, and it debars none from serving in the Church. Turning to 1 Corinthians xii, and Ephesians iv, we read of diversities of gifts bestowed for "edification of the body of Christ," which is the Church. Spheres of usefulness are opened, and work is provided for all no matter of what age, sex or condition. But our special question is: Who may lawfully serve the Church as "κηρυξ (kêrux), public herald, messenger, preacher?"

Both sexes and various ages were in the dispersion of Christians, Acts viii; and all aided in spreading the gospel

as far as Antioch in Syria, and elsewhere. In the common version (and in the New,) their work is called "preaching the word," Verse 4. But the Holy Spirit's word is ευαγγελιζω (euaggelizō), which means "to address with good tidings, to announce glad tidings," etc. This word has no special limit, being sometimes used for preaching, but more often for conversing about the gospel. It has the latter sense here; for it is in contrast with the official work of Philip who, Verse 5, is said to have "εκηρυσσεν (ekêrussen) preached" the gospel as a public herald. This is seen to be correct in another reference to the work of those Christians in Acts xi, 19. Though the translation again says "preaching" (but the New Version, "speaking"), the Greek word is λαλεω (laleō), meaning "to talk, to converse with," etc., though sometimes it has larger application.

In Galatians ii, 2, Paul uses "euaggelizō" as "glad tidings which (kêrussō) I preach among the Gentiles." The words stand in contrast here. Our Lord's word, Matthew xxiv, 14, for preaching the gospel in all the world, is "kêrussō." In Romans x, 14, 15, it is used twice. See also 1 Timothy ii, 7; 2 Peter ii, 5. This is clearly the New Testament word for public, official preaching. But "euaggelizō" is applied both to official and to unofficial announcing of glad tidings. The word "laleō" is generally limited to personal conversation, private addresses, and the like, Matthew ix, 18, etc.

Undoubtedly it is a high privilege and duty of every Christian to tell the glad tidings; but only one class is recognized as distinctly official, public messengers. After examination of every passage, we conclude that "kêrussō" is distinctly the official word. It is used about fifty-seven times, and always for official preaching; and it is always applied to authorized preachers of the gospel in their work. But "euaggelizō" is a general term for announcing the glad tidings in any manner whatever. It is used about thirty-three times, and is often connected with gospel preaching. It is used for Philip's private, personal teaching

as he rode with the Eunuch. The word "laleō" occurs about seven times in connection with the gospel, but is never applied to public preaching. Acts xi, 19, 20. Doubtless men would give many answers to our question: Who may be the "kêrux"? But what does the Word of God say? After most diligent search through all the records, we answer: None but men called of God, and who have their call recognized by the approval of the Church, may take upon themselves the public, official work of preaching the gospel.

We would emphasize every word of our conclusion, as the expression of God's idea for His Church. In the New Testament history, only men are seen to have been called to permanent official work in the Church; and the qualifications demanded (1 Timothy iii; Titus i) contemplate men only, as holding the high office of "kêrux." As all may see, our Lord called and commissioned none but men to preach the gospel officially, or to hold any office in the Church. What weight should this fact have with the Church? Our Lord selected and sent Paul as the special teacher of the Church among the Gentiles. What he says, therefore, is to be accepted as the will of the Head of the Church; for the Head selected, commissioned, aud sent him! If our Lord had enough confidence in Paul to give him this position, surely we should respond by accepting, without gainsaying, what he teaches.

In 1 Timothy ii, 11, 12, he says: "Let the woman learn (εν ἡσυχία—en hêsuchia) in silent attention, with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man; but to be in silent attention." (Here, "didaskō"—teach, refers to public, official teaching or speaking.) This passage does not refer to any ordinary service, such as teaching conversationally, etc., in which any woman may serve the Lord; but its bearing is *strictly and distinctly upon the public, official conduct of the public services in the Church.* This, Paul shows in saying, in Verses 14, 15, of the next chapter: "These things write I unto

thee * * * that thou mayest know how it behooves in the house of God to conduct one's self." (See Greek.) These, therefore, are rules for special guidance in the public worship of God's house. There, a woman is certainly forbidden to "conduct" herself as a public officer. In 1 Corinthians xiv, are our teacher's special directions for the conduct of public services, and for the behavior of those conducting them. In Verses 27, 28, he says that if there is no interpreter, he who speaks in an unknown tongue must be silent, or speak "to himself, and to God." In Verses 29–31, he directs that no two shall attempt to speak at the same time. In Verses 34, 35, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

In the next verses the Apostle anticipates objections to his teachings. He knew that some would make objections; and he meets them. His answer may be summed up thus: "Let those among you who are spiritual, and who think to be teachers of God's doctrine, realize the fact that I speak the Lord's will. But if any cavil at my teachings, let them remember and consider another fact, namely: that they did not make God's Word, nor did they shape His will. They are not so the originators of doctrine that the churches are to learn from them; but the Word was sent to them, from the Lord, for their obedience and not for their criticisms. Therefore, let them obey, and teach others so to do." After this we read, Verse 38, "But if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant"; as if the Apostle meant, "Leave him to himself. He is unfit to be regarded in the affairs of which I speak." But some good Greek reads: "If any be ignorant, let him be *ignored.*" In Chapter xi, 16, his teaching is: "If any think they may contend against the rules which I have given from God, for the conduct of the services in his house, let them know that neither I, nor any of the churches

have had any such contrary revelations and customs as they teach." The idea is, that no one has the right to dictate and argue anything contrary to the declared will of God, or to introduce any customs contrary to the Word of God. In 1 Corinthians xiv, 34, Paul bases his teachings about the silence of women in the churches, upon "the (νομος—nomos) law." But the word "nomos" is not limited to the Mosaic law, in its meaning. It embraces all the Old Testament Scriptures, even to God's creation laws; see Genesis iii, 16. The law of Moses only preserved the divinely-established relation, in which the man is the "head" of the woman.

No question is raised as to the ability of women to preach, or to hold an office and discharge its duties in the churches. It is true that many women would excel many men in preaching, and in other things. Not a few are endowed with gifts and graces which would give them rare power with an audience. But all this is foreign to our question, which is: What is God's own idea for His Church? The answer given in the Word of God should suffice for all who reverence His authority. We may and do *think* many things; but God may be trusted to *know* what is best for His own Church, and for all His creatures. Woman is safest, and her best interests are most secure when she submits her ways to His direction. It is His religion which has been her exaltation, and her chiefest blessing. Therefore, she, of all others, should obey His will. Let the passages noticed, be dealt with in fairness and reason, neither disturbed in their connection, nor wrested from their meaning. Woman is not forbidden to serve Christ in teaching; nor is she shut out from all part in the services of His house. As if to warn against misinterpretations, Paul added: "Brethren, be not children (childish?) in your minds, but in your minds be (teleioi) fully developed." As a good reason for receiving his teachings, he says: "For the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Paul says in 1 Timothy ii, 8, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." In Verses 11 and 12, he commands that a woman shall "be in silence." But by this it is not meant that a women shall not pray at all, or in silence during the public services. By the use of the Greek word *ανηρ* (anêr), (meaning a male of adult age,) instead of *ανθροπος* (anthropos), (any human being,) he emphasizes the command for the woman's silence in the public conducting of the services of the church; and makes it more clear that the man is to perform all the official duties. But women, and children too, may "deacon" (serve) in their own spheres in the public services, or anywhere else. The restrictions extend only to taking *official part* in the public services.

Under certain circumstances, some men are forbidden to preach publicly; and some are altogether forbidden. Many women ministered to Jesus; and Paul was greatly helped by them, Philippians iv, 3. Yet it was Jesus who sent Paul; and it was Paul who wrote thé restrictions as to a woman acting officially in the public services!

What is the minister's position? In one sense he stands between God and man; but he is not there as was the priest of the Old Dispensation; nor is he a priest in any sense of the word which does not equally apply to every Christian. He is "ambassador for Christ" to persuade men to be reconciled to God. So says our teacher in 2 Corinthians v, 20. The minister of the gospel has no sacrifices to offer in behalf of the people as atonement for sins; therefore, he cannot be a priest. He can only point sinners to the one sacrifice of Christ, made once and forever, announcing and preaching that as offered for the sins of the world. His "key-note" is "Christ crucified." The epistle to the Hebrews (who were a priest-educated people) is full of explanations as to how and why Christ utterly and forever abolished the order of human priests. As He did that, no mortal may, of right, now wear the title. The only authorized titles in the Church are elder (or bishop)

and deacon. Among the "gifts" are other words explanatory of the endowments which are to be devoted to the service of the one "body," the Church. But Jesus told His disciples that they were not to seek titles of honor, in the spirit which moved the Scribes and Pharisees. Whether they are forbidden to receive unsought titles of appreciation, from the Church, is another question. But certainly every ambitious motive, and all place-seeking, with all love of power and notoriety are positively forbidden. Our Lord said: "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your (καθηγητης—kathêgêtês) leader—Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth, (evidently meant in an ecclesiastical sense) for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called (καθηγηται, kathêgêtai) leaders; for one is your leader—Christ," Matthew xxiii, 1–12. Such teachings are not to be separated from their connection, which was the prideful ambition of the church leaders of whom He was speaking. Against them and their vain show, He was warning His disciples. The condemnation was upon their workings and schemings "to be seen of men," because they wished for the human praise; loved the "greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi." As far as possible from such a spirit, He would have His followers to be removed, and to live. By His teachings, the prefix to the names of the New Testament writers, is wrong; for it is there through the workings of the spirit of man-worship. The word "saint" is Scriptural; but it is so only as used in the Scriptures to indicate all those who are separated as the people of Christ. Our Lord evidently intended to condemn all seeking, accepting, and wearing honorary titles as "badges" of superiority in ambition for preeminence, among His ministers. Our Lord permitted himself to be called "Rabbi," which is the equivalent of "Teacher," the Greek word (διδασκαλος—didaskalos) for which, is sometimes translated "Doctor." If such a title is given for the single purpose of designating anyone as an

accepted teacher of God's Word, we suppose it may be lawfully worn. But undoubtedly the words, "call no man your father on earth," prohibit the giving of that title to anyone in the Church. It can have no other application, for Jesus did not mean that a Christian child should not thus address his parent.

Preparation.—The preparation of the preacher for his work in the Church, must be dictated by Him to whom the Church belongs. Our Lord awaited the legal priestly age to receive His consecration in the anointing to office. He did not begin to preach until after that anointing (Matthew iv, 17, compared with Luke iii, 23). Nor did He allow the preachers of His personal selection to enter upon the full work of the ministry until He had trained them for about three years; nor then, until after the further furnishing in the baptism "with the Holy Spirit." Was all that as example to the Church? We have been much impressed by the study of the course which our Lord, himself, pursued. In common with many, we have often wondered what He was doing through the eighteen years of His disappearance from the history, after the visit to the temple which is recorded in Luke ii, 42–46. Was He preparing for His great work? We can only find that when he was thirty years of age (Luke iii, 23), or, as the literal rendering is: When He "was beginning about thirty years," He came to the prophet-priest — John the Baptist — and demanded to be baptized. Then a strange scene occurred. John, who was so eager to baptize all who came to him, refused to administer the rite to Jesus, but suggested that Jesus should, rather, baptize him; and he would not comply with the request of Jesus until after the seemingly talismanic utterance of the applicant: "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness"; Matthew iii, 15. "Then he suffered him." And immediately was seen "the Spirit of God, descending in bodily shape as a dove, and lighting upon him." What does it all mean? Our study brings together the following revelations:

1. That descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus is spoken of as the anointing from God, Acts iv, 27, which compare with x, 38. But why should He be anointed?

2. Kings and priests were anointed; and in the records of the gospel, Jesus is called a King; while the epistle to the Hebrews is full of the doctrine of His priesthood. In both offices, therefore, he was entitled to anointing.

3. The anointing, in this case, was evidently of the priestly kind; for from the beginning of "the law," God had ordained that the priest should be anointed at the age of thirty years; Exodus xxviii to Numbers iv, etc. That Jesus came for priestly consecration, is seen in His waiting until the priestly age.

4. Another act ordered by law was the preparation of the priest for the anointing, by a "washing with water." In our Chapter XXVIII it is shown that "wash" was a law term, and that the mode was by sprinkling; compare Exodus xxix, 4, and Numbers viii, 7. Moses and John were both commissioned of God, therefore both were competent to set apart the priest to office; and both were of the blood of Aaron.

5. Jesus did not receive the ordinary rite at the hands of John; for,

(*a.*) John was baptizing those who came to him confessing their sins; but Jesus could neither repent nor confess sins, for he was sinless; see Hebrews vii, 26.

(*b.*) He delayed until his thirtieth year, and until others had been baptized. The Greek of Luke iii, 21, says "Having been baptized all the people," (see Greek) which indicates that Jesus waited for His baptism until after the people who came to John had been baptized; and He seems to have been the last person whom John baptized at Jordan.

(*c.*) As every record in the history of Jesus shows that He came to do and teach the will of God, if it was God's will that the people should be baptized by John, then Jesus ought to have been the first one who was baptized if His

action was to be an example to others of obedience to the will of God. But if there was any example at all, the people set it for Jesus, not He for them.

(*d.*) As we saw, John at first refused to baptize Him, which he would not have done had Jesus been seeking the ordinary rite. But after the explanation, John seems to have understood that Jesus desired the priestly "washing." The words, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," were evidently understood as, "We must conform to law." And is it not remarkable that Matthew, the Jewish law-writer, should be the only one who gave this explanation?

(*e*) The following parallel is developed:

OLD TESTAMENT PRIEST.	JESUS, BEFORE OLD TESTAMENT CLOSED. (See our Chapter XXXII.)
Was "washed" (baptized, Hebrews ix, 10) before being anointed.	Was baptized before being anointed.
By law for priestly consecration, had to wait until his thirtieth year.	Waited until His thirtieth year before seeking baptism.
After being "washed" (baptized), he was symbolically anointed with oil.	After being baptized, He received the real anointing with the Holy Spirit.
After his anointing he began to discharge his official duties in public.	After His anointing He began to discharge His official duties in public.

We cannot doubt that Jesus received, in His baptism, the ceremonial washing ordained for the priesthood, as preparatory to being anointed to office. As He afterwards went about performing the duties of His mission, we see Him doing the very things belonging to those who had priestly authority; and when questioned (Matthew xxi, 23; Mark xi, 27, 28) as to His right so to do, He referred His critics to the baptism of John. This is conclusive.

One of His first acts was to select certain of His disciples "to be with Him," intending, as later records show, to prepare them to be the first preachers of the gospel after

His reformation of the Church. When he finally sent them forth their preparation was threefold:

1. They had been divinely called.

2. Jesus had educated them for their work during three years.

3. They had received power in the baptism "with the Holy Spirit."

They were not sent into the ministry straight from the fishing-boats or business life; but were commissioned only after the above-named preparation. Is the Church to know, from this, what the preparation of its ministers should be? No standard is on record in express words. But we see that when our Lord wanted scholarly men (as to the wisdom of this world) He found them in Saul of Tarsus and Luke. Of the secular educational fitness of the others we know nothing with certainty. We do know, however, that they were men well furnished in the wisdom of faith and of the Holy Spirit. Timothy had been well trained in the Scriptures from his childhood, and both he and Titus had the learned Paul for their teacher afterwards. And this fact impressed us: When our Lord wished the teachings for the permanent guidance of the Church put upon record, He selected for that work one of the most able and cultured men of that age—Saul of Tarsus, whose every pulse-beat was that of a gentleman; whose mind teemed with all the learning of his day, and whose heart was aflame with a very eagerness of devotion to Christ; for almost entirely those instructions are found in his epistles.

The recorded teachings, as to special qualifications, are found, mainly, in 1 Timothy iii; 2 Timothy ii; and Titus i. We study:

I. "*Apt to teach;*" literally, "fully qualified to teach." This is found twice: 1 Timothy iii, 2; 2 Timothy ii, 24, and is one qualification of the elder for his work as bishop. In this one, of his two offices, he is to attend specially to the spiritual needs of the Church. He must be qualified to safely and intelligently instruct others in the doctrines of

salvation and in the duties of Christian living. Added to this, are other instructions bearing upon personal character and reputation, showing that mere mental fitness is not sufficient. Compare 1 Peter v, 1–4; 1 Timothy iv, 12. What is involved in "apt to teach"?

(1.) Knowledge of what is to be taught; not only so, but *intelligent* knowledge. There is a difference between "learning" and intelligent knowledge. A man's brain may be filled with learning which he does not know how to use or impart to others. The preacher must have an intelligent grasp upon, and understanding of, what he is to preach and teach. In 1 Timothy i, 7, Paul speaks of some as "desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." (In the Greek "strongly affirm.") That stands as the opposite of "apt to teach."

(2.) The preacher must be so under the influence of the Holy Spirit that he will cleave to the truth. We read, 1 Timothy iv, 1, 2: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." So, too, a warning comes from 2 Peter ii, 1–3: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

"Apt to teach" is to be so interpreted that the Church will protect itself from such as these. Paul gives a weighty reason for the exercise of great care, in 2 Timothy iv, 3, 4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound

doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (or, "having itching ears, shall heap to themselves teachers" who will minister as caterers to such a condition. The result is described in the next verse). "And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

But the Church is to watch that men may be obtained who, being filled with the Spirit, will be faithful to "the truth as it is in Jesus."

(3.) There must be proper training of mind and heart by proper teachers—men of experience and ability—and, above all, of proved godliness. Paul, as the trainer of Timothy and Titus, is an "object-lesson" given by the Holy Spirit. The great end of "apt to teach" may find its illustration in the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians ii, 1–5. See also his earnest charge to one of those young men whom he had in training for the gospel, 1 Timothy v, 21, 22. The caution, in Verse 22, "Lay hands suddenly on no man," is full of meaning. The Church is to study and know its men in order to fulfill its duty of securing those who will be "apt to teach"—fully qualified to teach.

II. "*Not a novice.*" 1 Timothy iii, 6: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

The Greek word is νεοφυτος (neophutos), and means "newly or recently planted." The application here, is to one newly received into the faith, or whose profession is of short standing. The reason is given, for this caution. Danger may lurk in inexperience, immature educational condition of mind and heart, etc. Thus, as we understand, the admission of untried men is prohibited.

III. "*Faithful men who* (ἱκανοι εσονται—hikanoi esontai) shall be fully qualified to teach others also," 2 Timothy ii, 2. The "novice" may be *a man of faith*, but how, except by proving him, can it be known that he will be *a faithful man*, to whom the care of souls and of the Church may be safely entrusted? Is not the succession of "faithful men"

dependent, in great measure, upon careful observance of this law?

IV. "*Rightly dividing the Word of Truth*," 2 Timothy ii, 15. In Titus i, 9–11: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." In Titus ii, 1, 7, 8: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine * * * in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

The word translated "rightly dividing," is *ορθοτομεω*, (orthotomeō), meaning "to cut straight, to direct aright, to set forth truthfully, without perversion or distortion." Therefore, "not a novice."

Such are some of the teachings about the things to be taught, and the manner of teaching them. We are made to think that God desires His Church to realize the difference between "sound words" and "sounding words." Jude 16 tells of some whose "mouth speaketh great swelling words, (*θαυμαζοντες προσωπα ωφελειας χαριν*—thaumazontes prosōpa ōpheleias charin) admiring individuals for sake of advantage." Such as they, would not be "faithful men." The word "sound" is, in the Greek *ὑγιης* (hugiês), and means "hale, sound in health, pure, wholesome." The requirement is, that the preacher shall use words which are wholesome and healthy in doctrine. And God's spirit also gave the word "gravity," which indicates a dignified and becoming manner, such as befits him who is "ambassador for Christ," and who deals with concerns of the highest importance to souls. These instructions are well calculated to impress us with a deep sense of the Holy Spirit's estimate of the work and position of the minister of the gospel,

and thus the Church has its warnings, as its commands. If such instructions shut out any, whether man, woman or child, from the public, official ministry, the words of our teacher are: "(επιγινωσκετω—epiginōsketō) Let him recognize that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." They are, therefore, God's idea of His Church.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

The creation, and the Church—Three greatnesses—Beginnings and results. God's three great steps—The Church His pathway—Why created. Sphere of work—God's opinion of it—Complaints of failure—The cause. Of old, and now—A good gospel for success—A disparaged Church. Remedy.

GOD had great purposes in view when He gave His Church its being. It was His masterpiece! In the great work of creation, man was, so to speak, God's last and supreme thought; for of what else did He ever say: "Let us make * * * in our own image, after our likeness"? To hold that greatest "thought" of the creation, the Church was organized. The estimate of God about it may, to some extent, be realized in the titles which are bestowed upon it in His Word; for it is called "the body of Christ," and "the household of God." Our Lord, Christ, is its "Head"; and from Him, through the doctrines and ordinances given to the Church, the thoughts of the divine mind and the love of the divine heart are made known for fallen man's recovery and salvation. By the existence of the Church, the earth is to be filled with the worshipers of God. Did the reader ever notice how little is said in God's Book about the creation of the wonderful material universe? Its greatness is beyond any finite realization! The light-flash through the immensity of space, at the rate (as computed) of nearly one hundred and ninety thousand miles per second, reveals the existence of some stars only after the travel of many years. Jupiter, a seeming spot of fire in the heavens, is many times larger than our world. When nearest the earth, the planet Mars is said to be thirty-six million miles distant. The moon

might be put inside of the sun, and yet have more room, from the center, for its revolutions, than it now has around the earth, at a "mean" distance of about two hundred and thirty-eight thousand eight hundred miles. The study of a lifetime, with all the advantages of previous discovery, still fails to fathom the unspeakable immensity of space in which the glory of God is declared. Yet, of one thousand one hundred and eighty-nine chapters in the Bible, not a score would be used if filled with the inspired history of creation! Very briefly is it told at first; and yet more brief, are the references to it afterwards. What does that mean? The historian seems to have hastened to turn away from recording the wonders of a created universe, that he might record the organization of a little society in the family of the man, Abraham, and trace its fortunes. The history of "the fathers" became of more absorbing interest than the existence of countless worlds. The reason soon appears. Revelation says: "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat; the earth, also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." But the history of the Church is the history of God's thinking and planning about the eternal destinies of innumerable mortals! Man was hurled from the very presence and fellowship of God into hopeless ruin, by that next-to-omnipotent power, sin; and the covenant for the Church, in Genesis xvii, was the visible inauguration of God's plan for his recovery. Abraham, the man of faith, with whom that covenant was made, became The Man of the Book of God! After his call, three greatnesses appear:

I. The greatness of God's conception in establishing such an instrumentality as the Visible Church.

II. The greatness of Abraham's faith in accepting the promises which made him "the heir of the world" while he was, as yet, a homeless pilgrim in a strange land.

III. The greatness of Christ's work, in confirming "the promises made unto the fathers."

God's Omniscience found the suitable man with whom to begin. For who, of all our race, would have been so grandly, strongly equal to the burden and strain put upon his faith when "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief"? Romans iv, 20. God chose him out of all the earth, and entered into his household to obtain material with which to organize the world-saving society. The beginnings were small—only that household, into which there came, about a year later, one child as the heir of the great covenant which was to embrace "all nations" in its benefits. It was not until we read the words of our Lord that we began to realize how great "the fathers," Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were. Those leaders and nourishers of the young life of the Church on earth were the declared representatives of its matured and perfected life in heaven; Matthew viii, 11, 12. To be in the Church on earth, or in heaven, is to "sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," in the kingdom of God! These men have been held in the world's thought as prominent in the Old Dispensation, but God's thought of them is filling the earth with His Church, and heaven with the redeemed from the earth! He reads blindly who sees little of faith's hope in that Old Dispensation. From it has come to us all we know of spiritual blessings. In the flesh, the Christ was the son (seed) of Abraham; and we have the Church because He came to us, with His disciples, out of the Old Dispensation. Neither He nor they, really, originated anything in the Church. They only developed what was begun when God organized the Church in the family of Abraham. And we see that God had three great steps by which His purpose, through the Church, was to overleap all the length of after time:

(1.) From Abraham to Moses.

(2.) From Moses to the Christ.

(3.) From the Christ to "the fulness of times," Ephesians i, 10.

And now "the regeneration" is filling the fleeting centuries. From Calvary it is working forward to bring all things into one in Christ, until the glories of a "new heaven and a new earth" shall appear as the dwellings of eternal life now preached through the Church! In Patmos, John's divinely-strengthened vision saw the end which, through the gospel entrusted to the Church, the "redeemed from the earth" are to reach. The work which is to be completed in the "fulness of times," is in the flood-tide of its progress. At the end of the Old Dispensation, the Christ said: "It is finished!" The graduation day of the Church, so long under the "schoolmaster," had come! Its tedious discipline, amidst the bloods and fires of sacrificial altars, was ended! Thereafter it was to enter upon its mission of teaching and saving a lost, sin-blinded world. And so it came to "the fulness of time," Galatians iv, 4. Once more the Christ—not crucified, but glorified—will say: "It is finished!" And then, "the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. * * * And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all," 1 Corinthians xv, 24–28. Thus under the administration of the Holy Spirit, who is the ascension-gift of the risen Christ, are God's purposes to be wrought out in the mission of the Church. Its promises, for this mission, are from Him in whom is life; and who has "all power in heaven and on earth" for their fulfillment.

The means to be used by the Church are of God; and they are His pathway to the accomplishment of that "good purpose which he purposed in himself," that all things should be gathered together in one in Christ. Accordingly, Paul writes, Ephesians iii, 8–11: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of

the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Compare Ephesians i, 9, 10; Colossians i, 25–27.

Such is the revealed mission of the Church. It is to make known God's "(πολυποικιλος—polupoikilos) exceedingly various wisdom." The sphere of the revelation is, "in the (επουρανιοις—epouraniois) heavenlies." This word is used in Ephesians i, 3, 20, and vi, 12. In the latter place (translated "high places") it cannot mean "heaven"; nor places of spiritual blessedness, for it there denotes the sphere in which our spiritual warfare is waged "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places.*" It is, therefore, applicable to all the sphere in which the Church is to accomplish its mission of making known the "exceedingly various wisdom" of God, which He purposed in Christ Jesus. Because of Paul's words just quoted, we regard the term as embracing all intelligent beings everywhere within the scope of the mission of the Church.

To one great result the Church is to look; and towards it always work. Paul says in Ephesians i, 20, that God raised Christ from the dead, "and set him at his own right hand in the (επουρανιοις—epouraniois) heavenlies;" that is, as the Head over all the spiritual sphere. And so we read in Philippians ii, 9–11:

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Therefore is the Church to honor Him supremely, holding Him up before all intelligent

beings as the revelation of God's "exceedingly various wisdom" for all redemption from the power of sin, and for the final overthrow of all the kingdom of sin. The Christ is the Head of the Church to whom all the members, severally and collectively, are to be in complete obedience. Then, in order to the accomplishment of the revealed purposes of God, all the works of the Church are to be in the direction of "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

In keeping with the Apostle's illustration, in Romans xii, 1 Corinthians xii, just as the members of our bodies obey the dictates of our thoughts and wills, so are the members of the Church, "the body of Christ," to obey the revealed thoughts and will of "God in Christ," who is the Head. Thus only can "the body," as a whole, perform the duties of its mission. And what is the revelation? Its several forms of utterance may be reduced to one: *That Jesus, the Christ, is this lost world's one hope of salvation from every form and power of sin!* That the Church may accomplish its mission, it must thus recognize Him in its own practical faith, and so proclaim Him to the world. The teacher whom Christ sent to us (and who came saying: "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us"), has left the record: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" and another messenger, older than he in the service of the same Christ, declared: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts iv, 12. Then, as if our teacher were making response, he says: "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

To this doctrine the Church is to adhere always, everywhere, that all intelligent beings may believe in and trust the manifold wisdom of God in sending this Redeemer to be the Saviour of the world.

In the passage quoted above, (Ephesians iii, 8–11) the translation of Verse 10, reads, "might be known *by* the Church"; and this may seem that the Church was to receive the knowledge of God's "exceedingly various wisdom" in providing the salvation. But not so; for the preposition (dia) which is used, means "through"; and so the passage should be "might be known *through* the Church;" thus declaring the Church to be the medium through which the knowledge is to be declared to all.

The thought which comes to us is this: If God's plan of redemption is not sufficient, He has taken very great, and to some extent, useless pains in providing the Saviour for the world, and in organizing a Church through which His wisdom is to be made known. This plan came out of the eternal thinking and purpose of the Omniscient God; and has the support of His Omnipotence. Can there be error, or weakness in it? Were, or are there any emergencies which He did not foresee? or, foreseeing, did not or could not provide for? Are we to give such thoughts place, when it seems that the Church is not accomplishing all that should be done?

In the great arrangements which God made for giving His Church a home, in creating this world, then personally organizing it, and superintending its workings and development for, say two thousand years; then coming in the flesh to work in and reform it; then making it the purchase of His blood by dying for it in Jesus Christ; finally, by personally selecting its ministers and empowering them by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and giving that Spirit to abide in it unto the end of the world,—in all this we see what He thinks of His Church. And since we have such revelations, we are constrained to believe that by them God would have us to share His thoughts, and so esteem His Church above all that is upon the earth.

The sphere of the mission of the Church is exclusively spiritual, though its works are to bless a carnal world. The great Head of the Church said: "My kingdom is not of

this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. * * * To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." He taught, as did His great Apostle, obedience to the government under which we live, John xviii, 36, 37; Matthew xxii, 21; Mark xii, 17; Luke xx, 25; Romans xiii, 1–7. We are also directed to pray for those in authority (see 1 Timothy ii, 2); but there is no teaching which can warrant the Church, or its ministers as such, in any interference with the conduct of civil government or political affairs. God's idea of His Church confines it strictly within spiritual limits. Illustrations are not wanting to prove the wisdom of this. For it is seen in all the earth, that when the Church allows itself to become involved in secular matters it loses the power of spirituality and depreciates in the esteem of those whom it should influence for Christ. But apart from this, the expressed will of the Head, given even in the hour of His sorest personal need, should suffice. The maintenance of "sound words" (doctrine) and the identification with secular matters are inconsistent, and will degenerate into unfaithfulness in the duty of cleaving to the Head—Christ.

Here we take liberty to remark that the complaints sometimes heard that the Church does not meet the demands of human need are founded in the lack of obedience and conformity to God's idea. Time was when none talked thus, for the Church stood in the unity, therefore strength, of one body. Perfect in its spirituality, there were no openings in its God-armored front through which the arrows of criticism could enter; and thus it faced the world and won its way. We believe that this instrumentality, the child of infinite wisdom, is as efficient this day, were it but rightly appreciated and used. But any serious thought may realize that failure has come through two sources: 1. The inevitable weakening of power by denominational

divisions, which gender internal oppositions and prevent whole-hearted and general concentration in the one work. 2. The yet more serious evil in the withdrawal, by Christians, of so much time, talent, and means from the use of the Church, and their application to the service of purely human organizations. It is so of the individual members of all the churches, and to an exceedingly large extent. Just in proportion as this state of things exists, so will the Church be unable to perform its mission. Were all the time, talent, and means now devoted by church members to the service of secular societies withdrawn, not one of those organizations could live! Imagine, then, what working-power would be added to the Church were all that is professedly consecrated to it, and which *actually belongs to it*, withdrawn from the human organizations and applied in its service!

It is the too successful suggestion of the great tempter which leads to the adoption of plans outside and apart from God's arrangement for curing the sin hurts of the world. No thoughtful Christian can doubt that the devil would most gladly have the world rid of the Church. Therefore are the members drawn to other devices for doing and getting good; and so they practically teach the world unbelief in the power of God working through the Church; and so, too, are the needed respect and confidence for the Church diverted from it. God's people need to realize that His many-sided wisdom has provided, in His Church, all the saving power offered by other agencies, and more. The divine equipment of the Church for its mission, shows that God proposed to save the whole man—body and soul. The evidence is in Romans viii, 11–13; xii, 1, 2; 1 Corinthians vi, 13–20; Colossians iii, 5–17; 1 Thessalonians v, 23, etc.

There is nothing possible to human devices which is not infinitely more possible with God. Reason approves this; and all needed for a triumphant, practical demonstration of the truth is that God's people serve where their

duty is due—in the Church—as they serve elsewhere. There is no work to which the Church is not equal, if those who compose it will only believe in and sustain it in its mission. In Timothy iv, 10, Paul expressed belief in God as specially saving believers, but, as also "the Saviour of all men." He has saving power for all, and it is to be applied in the mission of His Church to send out influences through the devising and operating of plans for the temporal, as well as for the eternal, good of sinners. For this reason "he gave gifts unto men" which are to be used in the service of the Church, not only for its own building up as the first duty, but for "doing good, as we have opportunity, unto all men." The gifts were bestowed for "the work of the (διαχονιας—diakonias) service."

The leading idea of the Bible is, that the redeemed are organized as the Church in order to be "co-workers with God"—as Paul says in 1 Corinthians iii, 9, "We are labourers together with God;" and in 2 Corinthians vi, 1, "Workers together with him." We read in 2 Corinthians v, 15, that Jesus "died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." And our Lord said that His people are "the light of the world." It is in the remembrance and practical application of such teachings that the Church is to execute its mission. Because God created the Church and dwells in it by His Holy Spirit, to energize it for its work and infallibly guide it into all truth, therefore, it cannot be possible that there should be any other organization so well calculated to save our race from the workings of sin. The above remarks are fully germane to our subject, and seemed necessary; for having ascertained the mission of the Church, we should also understand the causes, if any there be, which stand in the way of its accomplishment. In 1 Corinthians xii, is the inspired illustration of all the members of the human body working together, having a care one of another, and so enabling the body to fulfill the ends of its creation; and in Verses 15–17

is a suggestion of the manner in which the whole organization of body would be made a failure. That illustration was applied, and does apply, perfectly to the Church in God's idea of it. Fraternity, care, sympathy, and every testimony of good feeling are enjoined upon the members of the Church. If they not only fail in responding obedience, but show a practical preference for other societies, none can criticise God's wisdom in the organization of the Church and sending it upon its world-saving mission. Were its members faithful to God's idea in creating His Church, it would undoubtedly stand forth in its mission, according to the inspired conception: "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and (twice spoken) terrible as an army with banners."

It will also be realized that a practical fellowship among Christians would have a powerful influence in the success of the mission of the Church; and an almost irresistible attraction in the eyes of the world Such was the state of things in the Church when it started out, fresh from the baptism "with the Holy Spirit"; Acts ii, 44, 55; iv, 32–35; vi, 1; xi, 29, 30; Romans xv, 25. Are we a different people, or under a different Dispensation, that the same work of the Spirit should not be manifest among us?

It is, as practically shown in the records, through the suffering body that the erring soul often is reached. God fed discouraged Elijah, before He preached to Him about lack of service. Jesus fed erring Peter—even cooked a hot breakfast for him with His own hands, before He talked to him about his shameful conduct in Pilate's hall. Sometimes a gospel of bread and meat will open the way for the gospel of grace. It is next to, if not quite, impossible to feed a starving soul through a hungry body.

What is needed? That the Church awake and come out from its worldly alliances, and *put on its working garments as God made them*; then go forth to the duties of its mission in closer adherence to and reliance upon its divine Head, who has "all power in heaven and upon earth" as the

surety of its success. And how is the awakening to be? and how is the success through Christ to be attained? Only by the individual obedience of the members to almost the last of the Spirit's calls: "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works." And there is a great study in James ii, 14–20; 1 John iii, 14–18; see Malachi iii, 10, also. In the mission of the Church the value of the service in the office of deacon is beyond expression; and it can be made especially effective in the works of which we have been speaking.

Another matter, in which the Church is disparaged before the world, may not have been in the thoughts of Christ's people; and its mention may not meet with favor. The preface to its brief discussion, is in the question: Has the Church the full confidence of its own members?

In 1 Corinthians vi, Paul spoke of a practice which must have notably appeared first among the Corinthian Christians; and, if words can do it, he smote it as an outrage upon Christianity. He wrote: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to* be defrauded?"

In Verse 1 the word (*αδικων*—adikōn) "unjust" does not mean "unfair," or dishonest persons; but refers to those not Christians—the unrighteous before God. The doctrine

is, that all matters among Christians should be settled in and by the Church—the house of the common Father. For if Christians appeal to civil law, that disparages their own Law-giver—Christ, the Head of the Church. It is an open acknowledgment, by the convincing preaching of actions, that His revealed will and the abiding presence of His Spirit are inferior to, or in some way not as trustworthy as, men and courts of the world. But Paul believed and taught that the Church has the control of such matters as a part of its mission. What would be the effect upon the world, were Christians to adopt the idea of God as taught by the Apostle sent to the Gentiles?

We leave the teaching with the Lord's people, just as He sent it.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THINGS ADDED BY MAN.

Meaning—Human authority—The question—Times; seasons, etc—"Easter" Human additions—Sabbath neglect—"Judge," in Colossians ii, 16. "Temperance motto"—The Gospel simple—Additions hurtful.

UNDER this heading we embrace all laws and practices not of Scriptural warrant, by origin, command, or reasonable inferences. All the affairs of God's Church are and must be subject to His known will. Human ideas are not to rule the Church of God. This we learn from the teachings of our Lord himself. Old traditions may be contradictions of God's will. See what Jesus said, Matthew xv, 9; Mark vii, 7. The human is but human, however revered and holy. The so-called "Church Fathers" were not commissioned of God to add anything to His own revealed idea of His Church, nor to subtract anything. All men, and all human histories have erred; and may do so again. The Church is commanded to "try the spirits, whether they are of God." Contrary to some ideas, Romans xiv, 5 ("Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind,") does not mean liberty to do as one may choose. Nor does 1 Corinthians viii, 13, give a law for eating meat in common life. Those teachings belonged to the circumstances which called them forth, and will always apply in like conditions. The reference was to meats offered to idols, by the heathen among whom the Christians were living. "Might a Christian eat of such meats?" In 1 Corinthians x, 23–33, we are taught respect for the personal liberty of others, where things not essential are in question. So in Romans xiv. One must not undertake to dictate his own prejudices as the law for others. Criticisms and harsh judgments were to be avoided. Stumbling-stones were not

to be put in the way of others. But we are not writing a commentary, so return to our subject, the imposition of laws, duties, observances, etc., upon the Church, without any authority from the Word of God.

There can be no objection to most abundant services, in God's appointed ways. Yet a fanatic may exceed all of God's demands, or even His desires, and go to excess in religious service, as in other matters. He may offer what God neither commands nor wants. Religious enthusiasm must not run into excesses. There is as true religion in caring for one's family, and in being faithful to worldly duties as in attending Church services; but God does not cause our duties to clash. Compare 2 Peter i, 10; 1 Thessalonians iv, 11; 2 Thessalonians iii, 11. Should the Church demand constant neglect of family or worldly affairs, that would be addition to God's laws. Our question is: How far is the Church right in enjoining the various "times and seasons" and "festivals," commonly insisted upon for religious observance? Religious duty cannot be in the neglect of natural laws; nor is it in the adhering to forms, ceremonies, etc., such as are not clearly in conformity to God's ideas as seen either in His Word, or in the approved actions of His people during the time of the Apostles.

One of two things is true, of religious observances:

1. They have come to us from Christ, the Head of the Church, in person; or through the teachings, or the approved conduct of His disciples.

2. They have not come to us with any divine authority, nor through the approved conduct of the disciples of Christ.

After long, careful study and thought, we say of certain observances which are imposed upon the Church and honored as if from God, they are of no authority; and the second of the two propositions is applicable to them. There is no suggestion of them either in the laws of Christ or in any just and necessary inference from the example of His disciples. Our Lord was very positive in forbidding

that man's traditions should be given to the Church as the commandments of God, or as of any Scriptural authority. Now it is well known that certain "times and seasons" are observed in commemoration of the birth of our Lord, of His resurrection, etc. But we say, confidently, and after a thorough search of the Scriptures, that there is no warrant for them either in the Word or in the example of the New Testament followers of Christ. The Christian Sabbath is the proper memorial of the resurrection of Christ, as we learn from the approved example of the disciples. (See our Chapter XXXIX.) But because the word "Easter" is in the common version of Acts xii, 4, some suppose that there is Scriptural authority for the observance of such a festival; and this idea has been confirmed by many in the modern churches. The observance of "Easter," as commemorative of the resurrection of Christ, is now classed among religious duties. But the day was not observed by the disciples of Christ. It was not authorized by the Holy Spirit; and it has no shadow of warrant in the Bible. Upon Acts xii, 4, we remark:

I. The word translated "Easter," is in the Greek, "pascha," meaning Passover, and it is always so rendered elsewhere. As we explained in a preceding chapter, the Passover commemorated the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and has no place in the New Testament Church except that our Lord transformed it into the supper which commemorates His atoning death. The translation of the word as "Easter," is a gross and inexcusable error.

II. Herod and the Jews knew nothing of such a day as "Easter"; and had it been otherwise, they would not have observed it. Herod was a heathen; and the Jews, as such, would not have celebrated the very event which they wished to hide or deny.

The "Easter festival" is unscriptural, utterly! It came into the Church at some time later than the Apostolic work. We have read that the Saxon heathen worshiped "Eostra," or "Ostara" among their false gods, as the goddess of

Spring, and held her festivals in the month of April—the time of the annual resurrection in Nature, for its summer life. That festival was, as we suppose, transferred to the worship of our Lord, in the Christianizing of those heathen. We find no other way to account for its presence in the Church. If "the fathers of Church History" indorse the custom, that only proves its observance in their day, perhaps on the authority of some other "fathers," and all without any authority from the Bible.

A serious objection to the observance of any times other than Scriptural to commemorate our Lord's resurrection, is that all such acts tend to divert thought, knowledge, and duty from that day which is really of authority—the Christian Sabbath. This result is constantly seen in the special importance now attached to the supposed duty of observing Easter, and in the special and exceptional preparations for doing it. These are in notable contrast to the absence of any such preparations for the Lord's day. Thus is much of the Church gone, and more is being drawn away from the simplicity of the gospel. In 2 Corinthians xi, 3, our Apostle says: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is (εις τον Χριστον—eis ton Christon) according to Christ." See also i, 12. We need not mention other "times and seasons"—such as Christmas, etc.; for what has been said of one, applies to all. The condemnatory attitude in which the Bible stands to all such observances, should suffice to fix the faith and manners of the Church. We believe that God's people are at liberty to hold as many special services as wisdom may direct and consistent discharge of other duties may allow; but no one has the right to impose any services, observances, or celebrations upon man or Church, without the evident warrant from the Word of God.

Our Apostle found it necessary to rebuke the Galatian churches for their tendency, through Jewish interference,

to return to law-observances as their hope of salvation, Galatians iii, 1–5. And we see, in Chapter iv, 9–11, that he found another evil fastening upon them, and sapping their Christian life, for he wrote: "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Is there not "food for thought" in these words? What did Paul fear? Evidently that he could not wean them from their former ways; and prevent them from introducing observances, not belonging to Christianity, into their churches. So also, in Colossians ii, 16–23, are other significant teachings. He wrote: "Let no man, therefore, judge you, in meat or in drink, or in respect of (ἑορτης—heortês) a solemn feast, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths." This may be regarded by some as teaching that we are free to choose such observances. But it is not so. The word "heortês," which is translated "holy day" in the common version, means "solemn feast," etc.,—a religious feast of any kind. And the word κρινετω (krinetō), which is translated "judge," does not mean criticism by another; but it has the sense of "sitting in judgment to dictate what one shall say or do; a taking the direction of one's actions." In Acts xv, 19, it is used for a sentence of judicial kind pronounced in a court, thus: "My sentence (decision for them) is that we," etc. So in Acts xvi, 4, it is used for the "decrees" of that court. In John xviii, 31, it is used in Pilate's answer that the Jews should "judge" Jesus by their own law. See also John vii, 51; Matthew xix, 28; Luke xxii, 30. There is, therefore, no doubt as to the meaning of the word in Colossians ii, 16. We may read: "Let no man prescribe to you"; or, "administer judgment over you" in the way of imposing, out of his own ideas, duties in religious service. Very clear is the doctrine that no laws or regulations of man's originating are to be received as religious

obligations. Christians were not to put themselves in subjection to any such regulations. Then our teacher added:

"Let no man (καταβραβευετω—katabrabeuetō) cheat you out of your reward (in Christ) into a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not (κρατων—kratōn) holding fast to the Head (Christ), from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." The teachings following, are often misapplied: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."

The words "touch not; taste not; handle not;" have been much used as a temperance motto. But we cannot avoid seeing that the Apostle puts them aside as not God's law for the government of Christians, and classes them as "the commandments and doctrines of men." The laws of God give no favor to intemperance; but Christians are taught to "hold fast to the Head," that is, they are to take their law of living from Christ, and from none else. If holding to Him will not suffice, no "commandments of men" can. The plain doctrine is: Those who are under the government of Christ, take a backward step when they turn to the "commandments and doctrines of men" for the government of their conduct. No Christian can, justly, regard his pledge to Jesus Christ as less binding than any "commandments" of men, so that he has need to seek the aid of the latter.

We now arrange the Apostle's teaching in another order, translating more literally, and omitting the brackets

where they are not put in the Greek of the passage. We read thus: "If therefore ye died with Christ, from the rudiments of the world, why, as if living under the rules of the world, do ye bind yourselves by laws of men, such as, thou shalt not touch; thou shalt not taste; thou shalt not handle; (which things are all unto corruption in the using,) according to the commandments and teachings of men?" Paul says of those decrees of men, "They have a wordy show indeed, of wisdom and voluntary worship and humility," etc.

What is the Christian's duty? The answer comes to us from Colossians iii, 1–3: "Seek those things which are above (*ὁυ ὁ Χριστος εστιν*—hou ho Christos estin), where the Christ is." Under His government, and only mindful of His requirements, we are to go to the life-battle of Verse 5: "(*Νεκρωσατε*—nekrōsate) Put to death, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." The "general orders" are: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." To man's wisdom such arrangements may not seem best. But: What is God's own idea of His Church?

In Colossians ii, 8–10, Paul warns, lest any make the Christian (*συλαγωγων*—sulagōgōn) a victim of imposture, by "traditions of men," or in any way which is not "according to Christ." See Matthew xv, 2–6; Mark vii, 5–13.

All the ordinances of the gospel were arranged, and should be preserved "according to the simplicity of Christ." Thus "every creature" can easily understand and follow the dictates of the Head—Christ. Was Paul, thus working, less successful than we are by the aid of modern adornments"?

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CHURCH GUIDE.

Divinely sent—Criticism on John xiv, 17—The two Intercessors—The Interpreter of Christ, and of the Word—The Guide—Substitute presence—"Greater works," John xiv, 12—The Spirit's mission—Pentecostal attitude, the need of the Church—Strength for warfare—Paul's fears. Doctrine of personality of the Spirit—Words are teachers.

AS long as our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth He was the Guide and Comforter of the Church. With Him it walked from Mamre to the cloud which received Him and became as the chariot of heaven to carry Him up to His throne of glory. When He was about to leave His Church to the care of the human ministry which He had ordained for it, He said to His preachers: "If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot (λαβειν—labein) take away, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you," John xiv, 15–17. This was the promise that the Holy Spirit should be the Guide and Helper of those who were to have the Church in charge unto the end of the world; Matthew xxviii, 20. And it must be also true that, in keeping charge of them He would be the Guide and Helper of the whole Church. In calling the Spirit "another Comforter," our Lord taught of additional safety for the Church, though He was to be no longer with it in visible presence; for in Matthew xxviii, 20, he gave definite promise of His own continued, though unseen presence. But the Spirit was to abide as His Interpreter, and the Interpreter of the Word, which was to

become the Word of the New Testament by His inspiration, as the Lord said: "These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you," John xiv–xvi.

His special presence was to be more than compensation for the Lord's bodily absence; and was also to inspire the writing of the New Testament. But we must justify our rendering of the word λαβειν (labein), John xiv, 17, as above. The common version says "receive." Now, however true it may be that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit, that was not our Lord's subject nor teaching in this passage. We change the translation because:

I. As it now stands, the course of our Lord's teachings is interrupted, and a matter, foreign to His subject and the occasion, is introduced. The disciples were sorrowful at the prospect of losing the presence of their Lord; and He was comforting them with the assurance that He would send a substitute who would abide with them forever; One who could not be taken away because the world would be able neither to see nor know Him. He was to be a spiritual presence, in contrast with the visible, bodily presence of Jesus; therefore the world could not take Him away as it was about to take Jesus. There was the comfort. But

there was none in saying that the world could not "receive" the Spirit.

II. The word "labein" (*λαμβανω* — lambanō) fully admits of the translation which we give. It means "to take, to take up, to take in hand," etc., and so, in certain connections may come to mean "receive." But this meaning is forbidden by the connections in this case. For passages where it is translated "take, take away," see Matthew v, 40; xv, 26; Luke vi, 4; John xix, 1, 6; 2 Corinthians xi, 20; Revelation iii, 11; vi, 4, etc.

These two reasons are deemed sufficient; and certainly the change preserves the continuity of thought, and is in keeping with the subject. The Spirit was to be the great Intercessor in the Church on earth, as Christ is its great Intercessor in heaven. In the keeping of these two "Comforters" all the interests of the Church were to be watched and guarded "unto the end of the world."

The Intercessor on earth is to forever protect the Church from the results of human ignorance. Therefore, we read in Romans viii: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God."

The Intercessor in heaven is forever to keep the Church saved from its sins. Of this we read in Acts v: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

And so the record in Hebrews vii, is: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Thus in the exaltation of the Christ to heaven, and in the descent of the Spirit to earth, a perfect provision is

made for the safety and guidance of the Church. The Spirit is to be, so to speak, the individual possession of each believer, that in keeping each He might keep all, John vii, 39. He had always been the keeper of God's people, and was the inspiration of the workers of the Old Dispensation; but He was given in a special manner and measure to the reformed Church of the New Dispensation, according to the promise of our Lord. (Many passages show His presence in the Old Dispensation, as 2 Chronicles xxiv, 20; 2 Samuel xxiii, 2; Ezekiel iii, 12, 14; viii, 3.) In all generations of the Church He has been actively present; but not until after our Lord's ascension did He come for the uninterrupted abiding as the keeper and guide of the whole Church. He anoints the people of God and confirms them in Christ, 2 Corinthians i, 21, 22; Romans viii, 9–16; 1 Corinthians iii, 16; Galatians iv, 6; 1 John ii, 27, etc.

Being a spiritual presence He can be in all parts of the Church, at once, and abide with all equally. Therefore, our Lord said: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

As He wrought in all the earthly ministry of our Lord, energizing His human body for its great work (Matthew iv, 1; xii, 28; Mark i, 10; Luke iv, 14, 18; John iii, 34, etc.), so is the Church taught whence to seek its power. Therefore, our Lord spoke, in John xiv, 12, of those who should believe on Him as doing "greater works" than he did. But the word translated "greater" is μειζονα (meizona), meaning "more numerous"; and for such working, the beginning of the furnishing of the Church was the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Then began, really, the Dispensation of the Spirit, or the New Dispensation. And now the Spirit's mission is to build and keep the Church, and to keep it as the one "body of Christ" in vital union to its Head. And for this reason the great doctrine of the New Testament is obedience to the Spirit; honor to the Spirit;

dependence upon the Spirit; waiting for the Spirit in the faith that as the Lord promised, so He will fulfill. In this attitude was the Church on the great day of the Spirit's outpouring; and there was, as we think, the Lord's lesson to His Church in all after ages. The helplessness of the Church, without the Divine presence, is illustrated in the sorrow of the disciples when they realized that their Lord was to be taken from them; and it is taught definitely in the words of Jesus, John xv, 4, 5. The concluding sentence, "Without me, ye can do nothing," is written upon every page of the history of the experience of the Church. But our Lord also left the assurance, that in the time of need, the divine Helper would not fail His people; and this He did when He said to His disciples, Matthew x: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Thus, in every way the Spirit is spoken of as the Guide and Helper of the Church; and so, too, our Apostle declares Him to be the fighting-power of the Church in the great warfare of which we read in Ephesians vi, 10–18, where we are taught that "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," is to be wielded by "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

As before shown, Paul seemed, as it were, haunted by fear that those Christians to whom his epistles were written might be led away from a perfect cleaving to the Head, Christ. It was to avoid, or prevent, this very evil that the Guide was given. He is to glorify Christ by bringing and keeping every thought in subjection to Him. But upon

one special point a watchful care is needed, namely: The use of "sound words" in every reference to the Holy Spirit. His *actual personality* is a doctrine to be guarded and maintained with most jealous care. He is a real person; and no thought nor mention of Him should fall short of positive recognition of Him in that character. Thus He is spoken of by our Lord and His Apostles; and thus He is to guide the Church into all truth. This matter deserves special attention; for it is not seldom that the Spirit is spoken of as a mere influence, or power, which God is to apply, and which may be (as is often done) indicated by the little pronoun, "it." In our studies about the "Scriptural Preacher" we saw the stress laid upon the use of "sound words which cannot be condemned." There is place in this doctrine of the Spirit for the unvarying use of just such words. Right words, rightly used, serve to preserve the knowledge and purity of God's truth among men. But wrong words, or even right words wrongly used, may introduce truth-hiding, or truth-destroying errors. Therefore should the use of "sound words" be strictly adhered to in speaking of the Holy Spirit. Even so small a word as "it" may become a teacher of ruinous error. (Interpreting by facts, we suppose that some error in copying manuscripts must have given us "the Spirit itself," in Romans viii, 26.) As well may one speak of God, or of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the idea represented by "it," as to speak so of the Holy Spirit. *Words are teachers!*

When our Lord delivered His Church into the keeping of the Spirit, it was committed to *His* care, not to *its* care.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE SABBATH DAY.

The great day of the Church—Origin—Disciples and first day of the week. Pentecostal Sabbath. First appearances of Jesus—"After eight days." Galatians iii, 1–5—Christ, or Moses?—Sabbath did not originate with Moses—In Adam's time—Our Lord's authority—Seventh part of time. Same day impossible to all—Resurrection memorial.

THE great day of the Church, ever since the resurrection of Jesus, has been the "first day of the week," or Christian Sabbath. Under the Old Dispensation the seventh day was observed as the Creation Sabbath; as it is written in Genesis ii, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

About twenty-five hundred years afterwards, God gathered the children of Israel at Mt. Sinai and repeated the law of the Sabbath, thus: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work: But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of Jehovah thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: For *in* six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day; wherefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

It was the day of days before Jehovah; and He would have it "remembered" as the ordained day of rest and worship. That the people were accustomed to observe the day is seen in their conduct before reaching Mt. Sinai, in

the giving of the "manna." In Exodus xvi, 22, we read: "And it came to pass, on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread," that there should be no gathering on the seventh day. And so Moses said, Verse 23: "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto Jehovah."

That day was sacredly observed in Israel until "the time of the reformation," when "the Son of God" came. During all the time of His ministry He confirmed the Sabbath law, but He put such interpretations upon it as set it before man in its true light; and these were opposed to the hollow formalities of the corrupt church-leaders of the time. After His resurrection His disciples observed the first day of the week instead of the seventh; and as circumstances show, He gave His approval to their assemblings on that day. See His appearances, Matthew xxviii; Mark xvi; Luke xxiv; John xx. Those disciples were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in a special degree, after the ascension of Jesus; and still they kept the first day as their day of worship. In Acts xx, 7, we find this record: "And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." And our Apostle continued to recognize that day as the time for religious services; for in 1 Corinthians xvi, 2, he gave directions to the church at Corinth, (as he says, in Verse 1, he had directed the churches in Galatia to do) in the following terms: "Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." In Revelation i, 10, John seems to refer to the day thus: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Certainly this day has come down from the Apostolic practice as the day for commemorating the Lord's resurrection by holding religious services; worshiping God with our substance, and the "breaking of bread" in the Lord's Supper. Had not our Lord approved of the change—from the seventh to the first day—it is just to conclude that He would have given those disciples some intimation that they were going astray from the will of

God, which He came to teach. And had not the Holy Spirit approved, after He took immediate charge and control of the disciples and of the Church, He would certainly have fallen short of the performance of the duty for which the Lord said He would be sent, namely: "He will guide you into all truth," John xvi, 13. In Verse 14 Jesus said of the Spirit: "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." And was it not, and is it not, a glorifying of Christ when the Christian Sabbath proclaims His triumph over death? Would the Spirit have allowed the disciples, whom He was fitting to go forth to tell of the Lord's glorious resurrection, to go on under the error of substituting the first for the seventh day, if it was an error? Again: In John xv, 26, 27, Jesus told His disciples: The Comforter "shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness." So the Spirit was to teach them all things concerning Jesus; and they were to go forth witnessing of all things concerning Jesus before the world. Their witness was in actions as truly as in words. Indeed, it is agreed (and in John xiv, 15; xv, 14, our Lord teaches as an essential doctrine) that actions speak more convincingly than words. Now, then, the actions of those disciples said, so far as the records show, that the first day of the week was to be observed in the Church as the Lord's day, or, as we say, "the Christian Sabbath." The suggestion of the change was, as we must believe, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the authority to approve and confirm was in our Lord, for He declared that He was "Lord also of the Sabbath day," Mark ii, 23; Luke vi, 5. He illustrated His right to change the ordinances of the Old Dispensation, in transforming the Passover into the Lord's Supper; and in giving the rite of baptism to the reformed Church in the stead of circumcision.

That no express command for the change, from the seventh to the first day, is found, should not trouble us. It is safe to follow the lead of the inspired men who were to "witness" for Christ to all the world, and manifest His

will to all men. We have seen that, so far from setting aside their example, the divine seal was set upon them by the Holy Spirit and by the Lord, himself. It is no small circumstance that the first day of the week was chosen by our risen Lord for the great Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the praying Church. It was so! The records show that the crucifixion of Jesus was on the day of preparation for the Passover, John xviii, 28; xix, 14. The next day would be the Jewish Sabbath, or seventh day of the week. Fifty days after that would be the Pentecost, or the recurrence of the day on which our Lord arose from the dead. Thus, on the day which commemorated His resurrection, the ascended Lord poured out the great baptism upon the waiting disciples; and from that day it became the Holy Day of the reformed Church. It was the resurrection event which drew the disciples together on the first day of the week; and then it was that the risen Jesus made them glad by His public appearance in their midst; John xx, 19–23; Luke xxiv, 36–43. Then it was, also, that he "breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit." So was it that the first day was sanctified as holy unto the Lord, John xx, 19–29. We read: "And after eight days again his disciples were within," etc. That was the Jewish way of counting time. Each day was counted, though all of each day may not have been embraced. The reckoning was from one Sabbath to the next, and was called "eight days." The next day after Sabbath, or first day of their week, would be "after eight days," and thus the Christian Sabbath. To illustrate further: Our Lord was crucified on Friday, and remained dead until (our) Sunday morning; that is, part of Friday, all of Saturday, and part of (our) Sunday; and that, the Jews would call, "three days," though not embracing all of each day.

To hold to the seventh day now, is to ignore the illustrated will of the Head of the Church, and follow Jewish guidance. Then were Paul to visit us, he would talk to us as he did to the Galatians, in Galatians iii, 1–5. If our

Lord Jesus Christ is Head of the Church, we should watch for the declarations or indications of His will; and after they are ascertained, there is no room for dissent or discussion. Any oppositions to the first day, as the Christian Sabbath, must have originated elsewhere than in an honest and intelligent search for the leadings of the divine records. Paul wanted to know of the Galatians if they were going to turn back to Mosaism to find Christian doctrine? A like inquiry is in order as to all doubts about the observance of the first day of the week as our "Lord's Day." If we are going to follow Christ, we cannot go amiss if we walk in the footsteps of those upon whom He bestowed a double portion of His Spirit, first, when "he breathed upon them," and afterwards when He baptized them, John xx; Acts ii. As with circumcision, so the Sabbath (seventh) day was grafted upon Mosaism, where it "grew" until the "time of the Reformation." And then, again as with circumcision, the change with enlarged privileges was made for the New Dispensation. Was the day observed in Adam's family? No record positively asserts it, but the words in Genesis iv, 3, "At the end of days (as the literal translation is) Cain brought his offering unto Jehovah," seem the equivalent of "At the end of the week." The idea is confirmed in the subsequent history, when we find mention of the weekly recurrence of the seventh day as the day for worship.

Unanimity was secured, from the first, in God's law setting apart one seventh day of each week. But who can assert intelligently, that the seventh day in Israel was the identical seventh day of the creation law? There is no indication that the sameness of the day, in all ages is material. The doctrine is: One day in seven, or a seventh part of time for God. But which day? As "the Sabbath was made for man," man's Maker selected the day for His creatures. At first, God put His command upon "the seventh day"; and afterwards He put the seal of His approval upon the disciples in their observance of the first day of the week. In the variations of localities and interests,

men could never come to any agreement as to one day for all. Therefore, the divine leading was essential. The obligations to follow the indications of the will of the risen Lord, is upon all the world; for all the world belongs to Him. But it is evident that the identical first day cannot be observed in all the different localities of the earth. The reckoning of time is changed, as one travels east or west from the meridian. Crossing over the one hundred and eightieth meridian of longitude in going west, our Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath) becomes the Sunday of the Christian; and in recrossing to the east the Sunday of the western side becomes Saturday again. A day is dropped or added, as one travels west or east across that line. The matter of a Christian Sabbath observance, must arrange and adapt itself to accord with locality. God wants and we need that a seventh part of time shall be the time of cessation from the worldly work; but as it is a physical impossibility that the very same days and hours should be observed in every locality, it cannot be that God intended to bind all to the literally same day. We close the chapter with this thought: If the Jew would keep the creation work in remembrance by observing the seventh day so religiously, in what esteem should the Christian hold the day which commemorates the finishing of the work of his redemption?

And now, having finished the task which was undertaken in fear and trembling, and which has been performed in long patience, with earnest desire for man's good and God's glory through the Church, we leave the results with Him to whom the book is dedicated. And may the benediction of our Apostle, written aforetime for us Gentiles, fill every open and waiting heart:

"The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded, one toward another, according to Christ Jesus; that ye may, with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God."